

Dear Fellow Sunshine Coast Residents:

With new COVID-19 infection numbers continuing to drop across the province and vaccination numbers continuing to climb, it looks like the [BC Restart Plan](#) will remain on schedule. We are very happy to see things moving in a positive direction and like all of you, we are looking forward to resuming many of our normal activities and to connecting with friends and family in person again.

While this is good news for our province and our community, COVID-19 continues to spread in many places around the world. This increases the risk of new variants, some of which are more resistant to vaccines, with higher rates of severe infection in younger age groups. As we have all seen over this past year, it does not take long for these variants to arrive here, so please review the current [Public Health recommendations](#) to ensure you are doing everything you can to protect yourself and our community.

We are now cleared to travel throughout BC for any reason, and we are anticipating that we will be cleared for interprovincial travel as of July 1st. We can now gather with up to 50 people outdoors and with up to five people indoors, but as of July 1st we are expecting that these restrictions will be lifted entirely. Please do continue to stay home if you are sick, to wash your hands regularly, to wear masks in public indoor settings, and to exercise caution with respect to social distancing.

We are happy to report that we have had very few positive COVID-19 tests locally in the past month. Our local vaccination program continues to progress well ahead of schedule as well. Over 23,000 people have received their first vaccination and close to 7,000 people have received both doses. In all, 80% of adults and 75% of all eligible people on the Coast have received their first vaccination. Excellent work everyone!

That being said, we would still like to see more vaccinations for people aged 18-35. While you are at lower risk for severe infection, we would encourage you to get vaccinated to help protect our community as much as we can. If you are an employer, please encourage all your employees to be vaccinated, and if necessary, please help facilitate this by providing time off for your employees so they can be vaccinated.

If you are 12 or older and have not yet registered for your first dose, or if you received your first dose before April 6th, please register online at <https://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/s/>, by phone at 1-833-838-2323, or in person at any Service BC location.

Although we are seeing smaller numbers of people at the Respiratory Assessment Clinic, we continue to test over a dozen people with COVID-19 symptoms daily. As a result, Clinic hours have been reduced to Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. If you meet [criteria](#) for testing, please contact the Respiratory Assessment Clinic at 604-740-1252, or at coastrespclinic@gmail.com.

Although our high community vaccination rate provides significant protection, identifying new infections remains essential, even for people who are vaccinated. Please arrange for testing right away if you have one of the key [COVID-19 symptoms](#): fever, chills, new cough (or worsening of a chronic cough), difficulty breathing, or loss of sense of taste or smell. You should also get tested if you have two or more minor symptoms for more than 24 hours.

Please make sure to self-isolate at home if you are awaiting assessment or test results. You must continue to [self-isolate](#) until you have tested negative and your symptoms have resolved. If you test negative, but continue to have ongoing or worsening symptoms, please contact the Respiratory Assessment Clinic.

If you have more severe symptoms and believe you may need to be admitted to hospital, please go to the Sechelt Hospital Emergency Department. If you need an ambulance, please call 911. Please remember that the Emergency Department remains open and safe for anyone with a medical emergency.

Keep well, enjoy the summer, and please keep doing everything you can to keep our community safe! Thank you again for all that you have done and are doing!

Sincerely,

The Sunshine Coast COVID Physician Task Force

Dr Jennifer Baxter

Dr Ted Krickan

Dr Herman Mentz

Dr Brian Nelson

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