

TELECONFERENCE – SERVICES TO SENIORS COALITION

Coalition members and participants:

Yesterday a teleconference, kindly put on by the City of North Vancouver (organized by Heather Evans, Community Planner) was held in lieu of the regular Coalition meeting in order to discuss the COVID19 virus, community impacts and how we are dealing with these impacts.

At the meeting were several members/participants of the Coalition and speakers Mayor Linda Buchanan, Leanne McCarthy, Chief Administrative Officer of CNV and Suzanne Holynaty, Public Health Nurse, VCH. A few people from the community also sent information.

A. First Speaker:

Suzanne Holynaty gave the group an overview of the COVID 19 virus and a list of resources to find out more. She talked about how it is spread, testing and what you or your members should do if unwell. Suzanne said that while nothing is 100% sure, the best evidence suggests the virus is spread through droplets which stay on surfaces. Frequent hand washing and not touching our faces is a way to prevent us getting the virus.

Testing is only for those who are sick and require hospitalization and health care workers who have symptoms. She suggested that if we are unwell with symptoms such as fever, coughing and shortness of breath, self isolate for 14 days and/or phone 1-888-268-4319 or text to 604-630-0300. Fevers in older adults is a flag as many seniors do not get fevers normally, unlike children.

She also recommended that people practice social distancing that is keep 2 metres away from other people, do not go in groups of more than 50 people (although this number could change), stay in small family groups and only one person should go to the shops. Consider your home as a “Domain of Safety”.

The purpose of these measures is to better manage the health care system as it deals with the virus.

Her list of resource numbers and web sites included:

Urgent Care – 221 Esplanade. They are set up to deal with those infected.

- VCH Infection Prevention and Control - ipac.vch.ca
- BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool - covid19.thrive.health
- Health Link BC, to speak with a RN in 110 languages 24 hours a day - 811
- For non-medical information about COVID-19 including information about social distancing:
Phone numbers - 1-888-268-4319
Or
1-888-COVID 19 - Texting number 604.630.0300

B. Second Speaker

Leanne McCarthy – Chief Administrative Officer spoke about the following:

NSEM (North Shore Emergency Management Office) is working with community to develop and strategize. They are working with all three municipalities. Have many volunteers and should take the lead on coordinated efforts to support community. If there are private businesses that want to help, they are encouraged to connect with NSEM.

CNV is focused on safety of people, staff and now are trying to develop plans for business continuity. Priorities are water, sewer, fire, police. Prepped for 30% reduction in staff.

They are hoping for feedback from non-profits on what they need to support seniors and other groups.

JBcc is open for showers.

NSNH will continue the food bank

HJ open for day camp and childcare.

C. Third Speaker

Mayor Buchanan spoke about the following:

- Council is going virtual.
- Not sure of budget impact
- Committees will not meet
- Encouraging all possible business to be done online

- Top priority is to follow advice of public health
- Regional mayors working together to strategize about how to keep communication open
- Staff from Library and Rec Centers will be called on for support for outcomes from NSEM.

D. Participants and Members of Coalition Feedback:

- Silver Harbour Seniors Activity Centre closed – staff are working at the centre as long as it is safe to be in touch with members/participants
- Many Community Centres are closed or have closed their programs – many staff are working at home
- Red Cross Equipment Exchange, run by Cap Services is open.
- Libraries closed - Library resources online and print outs at library doors, is happy to share all resources given.
- Recreation Centres are closed
- DNV – Social Planner is still meeting with grant committee to ensure service providers get their grants on time to support services.
- Meals on wheels not changed
- Volunteers are vulnerable and will be affected if businesses (restaurants close)
- Comfort Keepers said that private companies have phone and volunteer resources and want to step up to work with Community – Leanne McCarthy suggested they should work with municipalities. Any networks of groups should be sent to Heather Evans at CNV to send to NSEM.
- Margaret Coates talked about the impact on seniors as they social distance and find they can't attend their normal places to congregate. These could lead to a reduced social connectedness which can adversely affect them.
- Jill Lawler from West Vancouver Seniors Activity Centre voiced that opinion as well and talked about what they are doing for their seniors

in community. She said “We are here to provide hope, and community connection with out older adults and to support our community each and everyday”!

- West Vancouver is offering
 1. Food service 10am-2pm daily (Take out and delivery)
 2. West Vancouver Seniors Help Line staffed from 8am-8pm Mon-Thursday; 8-6:30pm on Friday and 8-4:30pm on Saturday and Sunday
 3. We are calling each and everyone of our 4000 members to make sure they have the support, nourishment and services they need. We are also calling every single member of the West Vancouver Community Centres over the age of 70. We are asking each person if we can do regular check-ins. We got through about 500 calls today.
 4. We are doing classes online wherever possible; with livestream and facebook groups.
 5. We are collecting and cleaning devices donated by the public to give to seniors who do not have their own devices to access the internet.
 6. We are working with the West Vancouver Memorial Library to deliver books and other services from the library.
 7. Staff are handing out resources to folks needed these.

- Denise Howell from West Vancouver Community Foundation sent Lionsview the following:

WVCF are adding info to their website for the community, here: <https://westvanfoundation.ca/covid-19-community-building-while-social-distancing>

We have also setup a COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund and Grant. Those links are here:

-Fund, for donors to donate to: <https://westvanfoundation.ca/north-shore-covid-19-coronavirus-emergency-response-fund>

-Grant, for North Shore charities to apply for COVID-19 Emergency Response money: <https://westvanfoundation.ca/grants-scholarships/north-shore-covid-19-emergency-response-grant>

- Healthy Aging Core sent the following:

COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 is changing the way most of us work, socialize, and go about our daily activities. For those of us working and volunteering in the CBSS sector, it presents particular challenges as we consider how best to continue to support the older residents of our communities, and particularly those who are most vulnerable. For those who are socially isolated, or at risk of social isolation, it will be critical to reach out and connect, though perhaps in different ways than we normally would.

The technical term for what we are advised to practice is 'social distancing'. But, as many have noted, it may be more accurate to call this 'physical distancing'. Because more than ever, what we need right now is to be socially connected. **In this spirit, we encourage everyone in the CBSS network to reach out and support one other and those we serve, especially those among us who may be feeling the most isolated, who may be ill or facing challenges, and for whom the current situation will be particularly difficult.**

Conclusion:

If organizations want to send Lionsview any updates or information we'll be happy to send along to the members/participants of the Services to Seniors Coalition. Our address is lions_view@telus.net. We will try to update our web site with any other information as it comes to us www.lionsviewseniorsplanning.com.

Thanks everyone for attending our teleconference meeting.

Margaret Coates, Coordinator, Lionsview Seniors Planning Society