Grey Bruce Public Health COVID-19 Resources and Information: April 14, 2020

Connie Rossitter <C.Rossitter@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca>
Tue 14/04/2020 10:48
To: Jenna Leifso <jleifso@kincardine.ca>

As part of our on-going efforts to keep you up-to-date on COVID-19 related information, we will be sending email communications with resources and links that may be useful for you and your organization.

Please be advised you are receiving this email notification based on previous electronic communications with the Grey Bruce Health Unit and/or our community partners. If you do not wish to receive these communication updates from Grey Bruce Public Health, please email: c.rossitter@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

Tuesday, April 14, 2020

Here are links to some recent resources/information you may find useful. Many of these items are available on the GBHU website and may be shared publicly.

1. COVID-19 Statement on Ticks and Mosquitoes
2. Kids: COVID-19 and Mental Health Tips Video
3. Helping Children Understand COVID-19 Information
4. COVID-19 Guidelines for Grocery Shopping
5. GBHU Daily Situation Report link: https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/
6. OPHA COVID-19 Summary of Key Developments for April 10-13, 2020 (below Social Media links)

Follow the Grey Bruce Health Unit on Social media:

Facebook: Grey Bruce Health Unit
Twitter: GBPublicHealth
Instagram: gbpublichealth

YouTube: GreyBruceHealthUnit

OPHA COVID-19 Key Developments April 10-11

Provincial Developments

Enhanced Testing:

https://outlook.office.com/mail/inbox/id/AAQkADVIMGMxN2Q0LTg0YTctNDcwYy04ZjZhLTQyMTRjYjM4OGJjMAAQABU%2BHeFuy08Cg1ijaF%2FDifg...
As promised by Premier Ford, daily testing will be significantly expanded to reach 8,000 tests by April 15th and 14,000 by April 29th; several priority groups will be the targeted for increased testing; these groups include: hospital patients; those in long-term care and retirement homes; health care workers, caregivers, care providers, paramedics, police and firefighters; remote, isolated, rural and Indigenous communities; congregate living centres, including homeless shelters, prisons and group homes; vulnerable populations, including patients undergoing chemotherapy or hemodialysis and requiring transplants, as well as pregnant persons, newborns and cross-border workers; and public health units will be able to draw on retired health care professionals and medical students to enhance their capacity to do contact tracing and case management.

Updated COVID-19 Symptoms:

- the list of COVID-19 symptoms has been updated to include not only difficulty breathing, fever, cough, muscle aches, fatigue, headache, sore throat and runny nose but also a hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing, loss of sense of smell or taste, diarrhea or nausea/vomiting and for seniors, chills, delirium, falls, acute functional decline, increased heart rate and decreased blood pressure.

Cancelling of Child Care Fees:

- child care centres that are closed are prohibited from collecting fees from parents and will need to ensure that they protect child care spaces so that those reserved spots are there when parents return to work; those providing emergency care are exempted;
- the government committed to look into whether day care could also be provided to others playing essential roles such as those working in grocery stores and providing public transit.

Extension of Emergency Orders:

- the some 20 emergency orders that have been put in place to close workplaces, bars and restaurants, restrict social gatherings and price gouging have been extended until April 23rd;
- several new measures have been put in place to allow for:
  - the repurposing of buildings and building temporary structures like tents to reduce pressure on health care facilities and shelters;
  - hospitals to use beds and services in retirement homes to increase their capacity; and
  - recreational camping on Crown land to be prohibited.

Emergency products, services and innovative solutions:

- the government has received over 14,000 submissions from business through its Ontario Together Portal, more than half of which has led to the purchase of $90M in emergency equipment and supplies (e.g. gloves, masks, face shields, hand sanitizers); and
- innovative solutions are being sought to tackle remote learning for elementary and secondary students while schools are closed.

Collecting Race-Based Data:

- Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Williams, indicated socio-economic and race based data was not being collected noting that, "Right now we consider our main risk groups (to be) the elderly, those with other co-morbidities, regardless of what race they are .... regardless of race, ethnic or other backgrounds, they're all equally important."
- The Alliance for Healthier Communities is calling on the provincial government to start collecting and using socio-demographic and race based data in health and social services related to COVID-19 and urging interested groups to support this recommendation, as well as others.

Federal Developments

https://outlook.office.com/mail/inbox/id/AAQkADVIMGMxN2Q0LTg0YTctNDcwYy04ZjZlLTQyMTRjYjM4OGJiMAAAQABU%2BHeFuy08Cg1ijja%2FDifg
A limited number of MPs met in the House of Commons today and passed the government’s wage subsidy bill. The Senate is expected to pass this legislation later tonight followed by Royal Assent by the Governor General; and
The bill provides for over $73B in wage subsidies to business, not profit organizations and charities.

OPHA COVID-19 Key Developments April 12-13

Provincial Developments

Personal Protective Equipment:
- Ontario received more than 13 million masks, 200,000 N95 masks and 38 ventilators over the last five days; some 6.5 million masks were shipped this past weekend to over 650 providers across the province; and
- Premier Ford thanked the Alberta government for donating 250,000 N95 masks, 2.5 million surgical masks, 15 million surgical gloves, 87,000 safety goggles, and 50 ventilators to Ontario.

New Health Data Platform:
- a new health data platform called the Pandemic Threat Response (PANTHR) is being launched by province to allow researchers to better support health system planning and responsiveness;
- the platform will provide secure integrated health data so that researchers can better detect, plan and respond to the pandemic through looking at:
  - risk factors for vulnerable populations;
  - when and where outbreaks may happen;
  - evaluating how preventative and treatment measures are working; and
  - where to allocate equipment and other resources.
- the data will be drawn from a variety of sources (e.g. public health, OHIP physician, Ontario Drug Benefit Program and home and long-term care claims; hospital discharge summaries); and
- a special advisor and roundtable will be appointed to provide recommendations about the data and policies.

Federal Developments

New Long-term Care Guidelines:
- the Public Health Agency of Canada released interim guidance for infection prevention and control of COVID-19 for long-term care homes;
- the guidelines complement provincial efforts and call for a variety of measures such as identifying staff who work in more than one location, and making efforts to prevent this where possible, ensuring proper training on the use of PPE and identifying suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in staff, residents, and any essential visitors.

Federal Aid Programs:
- as expected, the government's $73B wage subsidy bill was passed by the Senate and received Royal Assent Saturday night; the program is expected to be rolled out within two to four weeks;
- almost six million Canadians have applied for support under the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB);
- Employment and Workforce Development Minister Qualtrough has urged the provinces not to claw back this benefit to those on provincial social assistance. While Ontario has indicted that it is reviewing the CERB and considering its impact on those on social assistance, British Columbia has decided to exempt social assistant recipients from having this benefit clawed back;
- some $50 million in federal support is going to farmers and food processors so they can cover the costs of mandatory quarantine for foreign workers coming into Canada to help with farm labour shortages.
New Rapid Test Approved:

- Health Canada approved this past weekend a new hand-held COVID-19 test device, created by Spartan Bioscience, which provides results within an hour;
- the test will be useful for those in rural and remote areas and among Indigenous communities as samples do not have to be send away for analysis; some 10-15 tests can be done daily; and
- some 10,000 tests are being shipped this week to the federal government, Ontario and other interested provinces.

We understand the challenges everyone is facing during this difficult time, and we will continue to communicate and work together to keep our communities safe.

Sent on behalf of the Grey Bruce Health Unit.