

Weekly WHRI Community Update – January 8, 2021

Sent on behalf of Dr. Lori Brotto, Executive Director, WHRI

Dear WHRI community,

Happy 2021! Like you, I am very happy to file 2020 away and look forward to hope, optimism, and inspiration, in women's health research and in the world around us, for 2021.

One event that we look forward to each year is our WHRI symposium. This will be a remote event taking place on Wednesday, March 3, 2021, in the lead up to International Women's Day. Please mark that day in your calendar and stay tuned for information on our program and keynote speaker.

We also look forward to the internal review of WHRI, which is a Faculty of Medicine Centre. This will be an important opportunity to reflect on the WHRI's research programs, operations, governance structure and performance, and to receive feedback on our core objectives and outcomes. The review committee may be drawing on feedback from our WHRI membership, so I ask you to consider assisting with this important process if invited.

We will continue to release our WHRI weekly communication, now in its 43rd week. We will use this to provide regular updates, save-the-dates, and share time sensitive and late-breaking information about the WHRI!

Wishing you all good health in 2021,

Lori A Brotto PhD, R Psych
Executive Director, WHRI
Professor | Department of OBGYN, UBC
Canada Research Chair | Women's Sexual Health

Updates from December 19, 2020 to January 8, 2021

Update: PHS A MASK USE POLICY & SELF-SERVE DISPENSERS

- As of Tuesday, December 22, 2020, **only medical masks are permitted** on the Oak Street Campus.
- C&W has completed the installation of self-serve medical face mask dispensers at building entrances in order to comply with the provincial mask policy, which states that masks worn in medical facilities including hospitals must be medical grade.
- The self-serve mask dispensers are intended for all care providers, staff, vendors and contractors, who should replace their personal mask with a medical mask at a building entrance, or proceed to a different entrance if there are no medical masks available.
- While staff were previously allowed to wear personal masks to their unit before switching to medical grade, going forward, no personal masks are permitted once staff and visitors enter a C&W building now that medical masks are available at all entrances.
- All patients will be offered a medical face mask by entrance screeners; however as previously stated, there may be reasons why someone is unable or declines to wear a mask, including

history of abuse and trauma, mental health concerns, physical health conditions, or age.

All persons entering hospital buildings are requested to don a medical mask by following these procedures:

1. Remove your personal mask if you're wearing one;
2. Sanitize your hands using hand sanitizer; and
3. Remove one medical mask from the dispenser and follow proper procedures to don the mask.

Please remember that masks are only one part of our infection control strategy. Stay home if you have any signs of illness, complete [PHSA's self-screening assessment tool](#) before arriving onsite, practice physical distancing and maintain good hand hygiene.

Our goal is for everyone to feel safe while working onsite. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, including requests for medical masks, to Marsha Simons at Marsha.Simons@cw.bc.ca, Todd Jacques at tjacques@bcchr.ca, and Dr. Lori Brotto at Lori.Brotto@cw.bc.ca.

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OAK STREET CAMPUS STAGE 2 RESUMPTION OF ONSITE RESEARCH

The intake process to resume onsite work has been streamlined in Stage 2. In this stage, assuming the activities fit within the Stage 2 criteria and cannot be done offsite, PIs will determine the scope of their research activities and who on their team should resume onsite work.

If you applied to resume onsite work during Stage 1, you do not need to apply again. Please email Todd Jacques at tjacques@bcchr.ca with any updates to your onsite personnel and research team safety plans.

If your team includes any new personnel or existing personnel who require training on new tasks, you are also required to create a written training plan for these staff. This could include detailing whether training will happen virtually or in person and the types of PPE that will be used to protect all those taking part.

For **new research activities**, please submit a request through the [Oak Street Campus Research Institutes Return to Onsite Research Intake Form](#).

If you have any questions, please email KDewar@cw.bc.ca

Funding Agency Updates and Opportunities

Updated COVID-19 WHRI Funding Updates

For all the latest funding news, COVID-19 funding opportunities, latest updates for deadlines and official statements from funding agencies regarding grant programs.

Email [Eric Lussier](#)

For assistance with grants applications or grants revisions. I am available every Tuesday from 8am-4pm for virtual office hour meetings with WHRI researchers, or by appointment.

NEWS

[Rural Survey Participants Needed for National RESPCCT Study on Maternity Care Experiences in Canada](#)

A national CIHR-funded study, called RESPCCT, is seeking help in recruiting diverse survey participants who have been pregnant in Canada in the last 10 years. The researchers are particularly interested in the issues that rural families experience around access to childbearing services. They hope to better understand how various identities, circumstances and backgrounds impact birth. Click the link to learn more and help spread the word.

COVID-19 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

ICODA/ Gates Foundation's – [Grand Challenges ICODEA COVID-19 Data Science grant](#) – 1/19

UPDATES (12/19 – 1/8) TO COMPETITION DEADLINES

NA

Updated Funding Opportunities and Deadlines List

Have a Few Minutes?

Save-the-Date for the **Sixth Annual Women's Health Research Symposium!** The event will be held virtually on **Wednesday March 3, 2021**.

The symposium is geared toward researchers, trainees, and other research and healthcare stakeholders. Registration details to follow! Email KDewar@cw.bc.ca with any questions.

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A Request from the COVID-19 RESPPONSE Study Team

British Columbia urgently needs population-level data on COVID-19. Although pandemics are known to affect men and women differently, population level data is often analyzed without proper attention to sex and gender. The COVID-19 RESPPONSE study will provide the first Canadian estimates of COVID-19 infection with a focus on sex and gender, to aid in informing public health decisions.

The COVID-19 RESPPONSE study is looking for participants 25-39 years old, willing to complete an online consent form and survey. If you or your research team has social media channels (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook), please help us promote recruitment. You can do so by visiting <https://whri.org/covid-19-respponse-study/>, downloading the Communications Toolkit, and sharing the drafted captions and graphics on your channels.

Staff Resources

PHSA Updates

Vaccine clinic planning underway

- PHSA is working collaboratively with our regional health authority partners to ensure all of our staff, paramedics and physicians around the province – starting with the priority groups outlined by the Provincial Health Officer – have access to vaccine clinics.

- Our current vaccine supply is relatively limited, but this will increase over time and anyone who wants to get vaccinated will have the opportunity to get vaccinated by the end of this year.
- The planning and distribution for this vaccine is complex and continues to evolve.
- Vaccine planning for PHSA is challenging as our programs exist within each of the regional health authorities. We are working collaboratively with our regional health authority partners, who have welcomed PHSA as part of their vaccine planning teams.
- The work around vaccine planning is iterative and we expect the vaccine roll out to be operationalized differently within each region.
- As we receive more information, we will communicate those details openly and transparently.
- In the meantime, we thank you for your patience and for continuing to practice all of the infection prevention measures we have grown accustomed to so we can keep our colleagues, patients and families safe.

Join us at a COVID-19 vaccine-focused town hall on Jan. 13

- We recognize there is lots of excitement and many questions about the provincial vaccination program and where specific professions and cohorts will fit into the overall timelines.
- We may not be able to answer all questions at this point, but we encourage you to join us at our upcoming PHSA town hall to get the latest updates and hear answers from our subject matter experts.
- The town hall will be held on Jan. 13 from 2 – 3 p.m.
- [Join by webcast](#) or by teleconference (1-833-353-8610, participant code 4478028#).
- We've increased our webcast capacity, so it's a great option to follow along visually—from a PHSA site, from home or using your mobile device.
- [The Slido event](#) is open — use event code #PHSATownHall to send in your vaccine-related questions to be answered at the event and in other communication.

Provincial Health Officer extends orders on events and social gatherings

- On January 7th, Provincial Health Officer (PHO) Dr. Bonnie Henry announced that the provincial orders that were set in December, restricting events and social gatherings, have been extended to Feb. 5, 2021 at midnight. The orders could be extended further depending on the risk levels and provincial situation closer to that time.
- The current orders include a ban on gatherings with people outside of one's immediate household (with limited exceptions for people who live alone).
- The PHO also continues to advise against any non-essential travel.
- More detailed information can be viewed on the B.C. government website.

Flu policy now in effect: Please self-report

- Flu season is here, and the [provincial influenza policy](#) and [PHSA's influenza prevention policy](#) are now officially in effect. These will remain in effect until the end of the flu season is declared, usually at the end of March.
- Please make some time to [self-report your flu protection choice](#) as soon as you can! **All PHSA employees, including medical staff and contractors, are required to self-report.**
- Questions? Visit [Flu Prevention on POD](#) or email flu@phsa.ca.

Invest in your wellness this winter

- Start your new year off right by registering for the Jan. 14 session of "[Resilience in the Workplace – Co-Existing with COVID-19: What is your plan?](#)"

- Check out our [psychosocial resource](#) page for information on staying psychologically well and the [COVID-19: Pandemic Toolkit](#) from Homewood Health (our Employee Family Assistance provider).

Ongoing Staff Resources

- C&W COVID-19 collection site – Open seven days per week, 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Priority given to health care workers and priority population patients between 7 and 8 a.m. Health care workers have a unique number to call (604-875-2016) that allows them to leave a message.
- C&W COVID-19 learning modules – Three courses for all C&W staff and students to provide a current overview of the COVID-19 pandemic. Courses are for staff already working at the C&W campus. Staff also need to review prior to returning to the workplace. Courses are available on [Learning Hub](#) and will take about two hours to complete.
- Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) document on ePOPS for information on mask use: [CW Mask Use in Health Care Facilities During the COVID-19 Pandemic: FAQ](#).
- For workplace health questions, call the PHSA COVID-19 Resource Line at 1-833-875-2155 (toll free) or 604-875-7244, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Visit phsa.ca/covid19staff for COVID-19 staff guidelines and updates.
- Continue to check the BCCDC's website as a trusted source of information.
- Learn about [health and wellness](#) resources to support you.