

E.D. Communication – January 11, 2022

Maintaining safe services

- Everyone must continue to follow protocols around physical distancing, hand hygiene and the use of Personal Protective Equipment.
- While there is much discussion about the best masks, KSCL will be moving to KN95's as they are re-useable and fit well. Communication about useage & distribution of these masks will occur this week.
- Given the level of cases may impact the ability of public health officials to conduct contact tracing, KSCL will be using tracking sheets to monitor workplace exposures to help us make immediate decisions to keep people safe.

KSCL contingency plans in place

We need to ensure we maintain services with anticipated staffing shortages due to illness. Therefore, we will be preparing for:

- Having a crisis response team at each site (staff willing to work extra if need be).
- Staggering staffing schedules to protect as many individuals and staff as possible from incidents of exposure. Brigitte working with SRCW's on this.
- Having plans in place to temporarily reduce community inclusion or other less critical services in order to redeploy staff to sustain group homes if you face a staff shortage.
- Asking families to help when needed, including by keeping supported individual's home.

Managing staff illness

How soon can staff who are ill with COVID-19 return to work ? General information about what staff should do if they have COVID [can be found on the BC CDC web site here.](#)

However, CLBC has confirmed the following direction from the Provincial Health Officer's team:

- In group homes, fully vaccinated staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 can return to work **when they have completed five days of isolation.**
- In order to prevent disruption of essential services in group homes, staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 can return to work prior to completion of their five-day isolation period provided:
 - they wear full PPE and observe COVID-19 safety plans, and

- they work with supported individuals who are fully vaccinated
- In this type of situation, group homes should seek to call back staff who have completed the longest amount of their self-isolation period first (ie. Bring back staff who have completed 4 days > 3 days > 2 days > 1 days). If staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 have been brought back to work they should preferentially work with residents who are also COVID-19 positive.

Rapid testing

The government recently announced plans to increase their supply of rapid tests over the next few months to help address the significant growth in demand for testing. While some providers are using them to help with staffing decisions, the rapid tests currently remain in short supply. KSCL is trying to order these tests.

The importance of strong communication with staff and families

We discussed the importance of regular communication with staff and families. SRCW's are communicating with families via phone calls and the use of Share Vision bulletins and ED Communication.

Please do not hesitate if you have any concerns or questions to myself or anyone at the Administration office.

Thank-you,
Kathleen Elias, Executive Director
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