



## **April 2<sup>nd</sup> CLBC Teleconference for Individuals and Families**

### ***Plain Language Summary of Questions and Answers***

#### **Who were the presenters answering questions on this call?**

- Minister Shane Simpson, Social Development and Poverty Reduction
- Deputy Minister David Galbraith, Social Development and Poverty Reduction
- Dr. Daniele Behn-Smith, Deputy Provincial Health Officer
- Ross Chilton, CEO, Community Living BC

**Question - How does CLBC help support those individuals where the home isn't the safest place for them because of their unique needs? What if the family is unable to provide hours at home and there is no day program?**

#### **Answer:**

- The Provincial Health Office has given CLBC and service providers guidance so people and families can continue to receive support in the safest way possible.
- This means balancing the risk of spreading the virus with making sure people have the support they need to be safe.
- If being home isn't safe, it's important to be supported with the smallest amount of people possible, keep physically distant from each other (2 meters), wash hands often, and do not touch your face.
- CLBC and service providers are working to make sure support staff are available to the people and families who need the most help during this time.
- There isn't enough staff for people to receive 1:1 support in the place of their regular day programs.
- If families *can't* manage with the level of support they have now, then they should talk to their service provider and work with CLBC.
- If a family *can* provide more support than they usually do, then they should also let their service provider know so staff can focus on the people who need more help at this time.

**Question - If there are no day programs then how will these funds be redirected to families for respite?**

**Answer:**

- 80% of agency and day program funding goes to pay staff who are now supporting people in different settings, including their homes.
- CLBC and service providers are working to make sure there is support available to the people and families who need it the most.
- Some home sharing providers and families are taking on more support for people. CLBC and the Ministry are taking a look at that.

**Question - How is CLBC going to support staff and home sharing providers if they get sick?**

**Answer:**

- Each person's situation is different and so the solution and supports will be different.
- There have been some individuals, family members, staff and home sharing providers who have already tested positive for COVID-19 and they are getting very good care from the health system.
- CLBC and agency support staff will work with the family, group home or home sharing provider to make sure the right supports are in place to keep everyone healthy and safe.
- If someone tests positive with COVID-19 health officers will contact the person to tell them the steps to take and how not to spread the virus.
- 80% of people get better from COVID-19 at home and don't need to go to the hospital.

**Question - What happens if an individual goes in to hospital? Can a parent or support person stay with them?**

**Answer:**

- The Provincial Health Office knows this is an important question and are working with the emergency command center to get an answer as soon as possible.
- In the meantime, each situation is being looked at to make sure people are supported in the safest way possible should they need to go to the hospital.

## **Question - What role do facilitators/analysts have in working out service level hours?**

### **Answer:**

- Service providers and families have been working together to figure out the level of support needed for people to be safe during this time.
- There isn't enough staff for all people to receive 1:1 support in the place of their regular community inclusion day programs.
- If the level of support for a person cannot be agreed upon then individuals and families can reach out to CLBC to help with problem solving.

## **Question - Is there a shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in our sector?**

### **Answer:**

- Yes, PPE is in short supply, specifically masks.
- Masks can be helpful if a person has fever, cough or sneeze, but masks don't prevent someone from getting infected.
- The government is working to make sure PPE gets where it is needed the most.
- It's important to remember how to keep everyone safe without PPE. For example: self isolating if you feel any symptoms, keeping physically distant from others, interacting with as few people as possible, hand washing, and cleaning surfaces that people touch like door knobs and light switches.
- For some people supported by CLBC it can be hard to follow these health rules. In these situations, the Health Authorities are doing their best to get PPE to people and their support staff.
- The Provincial Health Office has provided more information for service providers about how to keep everyone safe [that you can read here](#).

## **Question - Where staff are coming into my home, how can we be assured they're following protocols? Should staff be coming into homes at all?**

### **Answer:**

- It's important to balance the risk of spreading the virus with making sure people have the right kind of support in their home to be safe.
- The main way the virus is spread is when someone has symptoms like fever and a cough. Staff should stay home and self isolate if they have any symptoms.

- If staff feel healthy and are following the rules of hand washing and cleaning surfaces twice a day, then the risk of spreading the virus is very low.
- Other guidance from the Provincial Health Office includes, where possible, reducing the number of staff supporting one person.

**Question - How will CLBC address the needs of those who may not be getting services now but who are eligible?**

**Answer:**

- CLBC is 100% open and available to help individuals and families plan and make requests for new or different supports as need be.

**Question - Will I lose CLBC funded employment supports now that I've lost my job? Will I be able to access my previous supports after this crisis is over?**

**Answer:**

- People won't lose the support they receive, but the kind of support may change. For example- if you lost a job you may need help applying for EI or applying for a new job once things start to get back to normal.
- For most people, yes, they can go back to their same supports. For others, they might like the new way they are being supported and won't want to go back to previous supports.
- Some things may change and may change for the better

**Question- If I got laid off, will my PWD be affected if I apply for EI?**

**Answer:**

- If you get laid off your job because of COVID-19 you can receive EI benefits and they will not be clawed back off your PWD cheque.
- If you are not eligible for [the new federal benefits](#), then you will automatically get an extra \$300 on your April, May and June PWD cheques.
- For people who pay for a bus pass or compass card, this money will be returned on your next PWD cheques for April, May and June.
- You can [read the new announcement from Ministry Simpson here](#).

**Question - For those on PWD, can I apply for the new \$500 rental subsidy?**

**Answer:**

- No. Your Income Assistance or Disability Assistance includes a shelter allowance and has not changed as a result of COVID-19.
- The \$500 rental subsidy is for people who lost employment income because of COVID-19.