

MEMO

TO: All Staff
FROM: Christine Scott, CEO
DATE: April 5, 2020
RE: COVID-19 Pandemic Planning and Response

As we come to a close of another week, I'd like to recap some of our discussions about key activities and changes, and share some of our plans for the week ahead. I appreciate that most of our staff are participating in the all staff conference calls, so much of this information will not be entirely new. That said, it is useful to have a weekly recap, particularly during these rapidly changing times.

Pandemic Leadership Team and Health and Safety

We talked about clarity of roles and that we have created a Pandemic Leadership Team to streamline decision-making and approval processes, and to ensure there is back-up should one of us become ill. In addition to myself, the team includes: Andrea Mohr, Tess Huntly, Gareth Williams and Maggie Vilvang.

The team works together to review the various stages of planning and the recommendations of all funders, government, regulatory bodies and health officials to determine what changes are needed in our services. We are regularly reviewing recommendations, ensuring that safety measures are in place and that procedures are being followed.

As discussed on our calls, we are asking all of you to ensure that you are reviewing all information that we send to you and that you are diligent in following all required procedures. We spoke this past week about the information that has been summarized in our Frequently Asked Questions document and the onsite visit assessment form for example.

I know concerns remain about the shortage of personal protective equipment. Please know that we, like our colleagues in this sector and elsewhere, are working hard to source additional items. This has been a challenge throughout our province and across the country. We are working with our industry colleagues and funders and are hopeful to increase our supply. Additionally, we have received assurances from our funders that they are coordinating with Health should the need for additional supports arise. We will share any updates with you, and ask that if you have any leads to please let us know.

Ensuring the safety of the people we serve, and our staff, is our greatest priority. As such, I would like to remind you again to please regularly check the staff web page here: <https://kinsight.org/covid-19->

[updates-for-staff/](#). If you are uncertain of any procedures or need clarification I ask that you raise these concerns with your department Director, or Andrea Mohr.

Community Outreach Response Team

Staying home to help reduce exposure to the virus and to contain its spread is the right thing to do, but it comes with many challenges. We know that some families, caregivers and people we serve are experiencing financial hardships and impacts of isolation. Some families cannot leave their homes to purchase groceries and supplies, or may not have enough money to do so. We also know that people are running out of engaging activities and stimulating things to do, which can cause additional stress in the home. To support families, adults and caregivers we serve that are in need, we are offering:

- Groceries and supplies purchased and delivered
- Financial support to purchase groceries and supplies
- Activity kits
- Online connections and learning through [CoMakeDo.ca](#)

This initiative was officially launched on April 1st, following considerable work by a team of staff from across our organization. For more information about our outreach services and how to use them with the families and individuals you serve, please see the attached materials.

Changing roles to meet evolving needs

Our outreach services are just one of the many ways our employees have been redeployed to support the evolving needs of the people we serve. A cross-organizational team, including LIFE Guides, Family and Children's Services Consultants, Community Inclusion staff and Community Development, have been working hard to source groceries and supplies and to create activity kits. More staff will be engaged in the weeks ahead as we fill orders and make deliveries to families, caregivers and adults served.

Across our organization, almost every employee has seen a significant shift in their work – either in what they do, how they do it or who they do it with. Many are working from home or with a new schedule, and others have been redeployed into significantly different roles. No matter your role today or next week, the service you provide is essential. I appreciate your flexibility as we continue to modify our services and adapt our work to meet the needs of those we serve.

Payroll compliments and concerns

This week's pay represented the first pay period since implementing large scale COVID-19 changes. A huge shout out to Paul Dawson for managing payroll in the midst of many moving parts. We appreciate Paul's considerable effort, though we do anticipate that there will be a few glitches. If you notice any irregularity or error in your pay, please let Paul know.

Important reminder: Protect privacy

As we move to more online meetings and calls, it's a good time to remind everyone of the importance of confidentiality. Please ensure you maintain the privacy of those we serve. If you need to speak about an individual person or circumstance, please do so without identifying information and only with those who need to participate in the conversation.

Your feedback and more information

Again, please continue to regularly check your email and the staff webpage for COVID-19 updates from Kinsight. For the time being, I will continue to hold all staff conference calls via zoom, and will continue to evaluate and adjust the frequency as needed. The calls are held:

Monday and Wednesday from 11:00 – 11:30 a.m., Wednesday from 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. and on Saturday from 11:00 – 11:30 a.m.

If you have specific questions about our pandemic plans and what they mean for you, please contact:

- Gareth Williams, Family and Children's Services at gwilliams@kinsight.org 604-306-7172
- Tess Huntly, Adult Services at thuntly@kinsight.org 604-374-5168
- Andrea Mohr, Human Resources & Administration at amohr@kinsight.org 604-790-9683

Please know that I so deeply appreciate all of you and the work that you do. I know this is a difficult time on all fronts of our lives. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to better support you in your work with us.

Thank you again for your continued flexibility and daily inspirations. As you see and experience acts of kindness among your colleagues, people served, neighbours and community, I hope you will share them with each other and with your Directors. They are the silver linings that give hope and encouragement during this challenging period.

Stay well. Be safe.