

COSCO Highlights

<http://www.coscobc.org>

May 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/COSCOBC/>



Greetings to our affiliate and associate members:

As the weeks turn into months we have become more and more aware of the shocking conditions in many long-term care residences. The incredible statistics show us that seniors have borne the brunt of the deadly sacrifice to the monster in our midst. Nobody can be sure how long COVID-19 will be with us but one day we will begin to reconstruct our world.

Part of that new beginning cannot be business as usual in our treatment of those who require long-term care. Seventy years ago COSCO began to advocate for the well-being of seniors. We are still doing that, and the needs of our most vulnerable citizens who require assistance to maintain the kind of existence that they deserve is going to be uppermost in our efforts to assure that the brave new world that many people talk about is a far better one for those in need.

Change is not going to happen unless plans are in place to alter the societal and governmental attitudes that allowed the conditions revealed by the pandemic to flourish. We call upon the federal and provincial governments to establish task forces to study and recommend best practices. The fate of many reports arguing for change is often a brief interlude when the good advice is acknowledged. Then the report lies gathering dust in the offices of the powers that should have the responsibility and the determination to make changes. Not this time?? It will take vigilance to keep the anger that we feel today alive and smoldering. Outrage is a good fuel though.

Take a look at COSCO's Facebook page to see Past President Gudrun Langolf at a Townhall meeting discussing COVID-19 and the future of elder care in Canada. Long-term care is front and centre in COSCO's advocacy work. We can't just return to the way things were. All too often they were horrible.

Sheila Pither, COSCO President



The COSCO Executive Committee invites you, at the request of the BC Centre for Disease Control, to urge the members in your organization to participate in a survey to help the BC government develop further appropriate strategies and policies in regards to COVID-19.

Please provide the relevant information below, to your members.

Public health and government leaders have made significant decisions impacting every aspect of our lives in recent weeks. We want to hear from you as we plan to ease restrictions while keeping our citizens safe, especially those most vulnerable.

BC COVID-19 SPEAK: Your story, our future is a population health survey to understand citizen experiences, knowledge and actions during the COVID-19 pandemic. This survey is the first of several activities that will strengthen our pandemic response and our understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 to date (social, economic, mental wellness and community wellness).

Visit this page to take the survey: www.bccdc.ca/covid19survey

About the survey

- The survey is open to all British Columbians 18 years of age and older.
- The survey **takes 10-15 minutes** and can be done online on any tablet, computer or mobile device.
- The survey will be **open until May 31**
- The online survey is available in English and Chinese, as well as a Punjabi survey translation guide.

At the end of the survey, you will be asked about participating in two important initiatives:

- **A serology survey** (blood testing) to help determine immunity across the population
- **Planning for future waves** in which identifying, containing and tracing are substantially strengthened through technology tools to enable integrated and coordinated information sharing

Help the people in your life to participate.

If you know someone who may have difficulty accessing or using a computer, open the survey via the link above, give them a call, and go through all the questions, inputting their answers into the online survey on their behalf. We need your help to prepare for B.C.'s future, and every voice counts.

Participants without online access or needing language assistance can call 1-833-707-1900, seven days a week between 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

“The COSCO Seniors Health and Wellness Institute continues with their remote work, updating the handout/summaries of their health and wellness presentations. When we re-open our schedule for workshops, we will be able to offer some handouts in other languages. We have translated 10 into Chinese, 3 into Japanese, 2 into Punjabi and 1 into the Spanish language. When people attend the free workshops, they will be able to take home some resource information in their preferred language. We are also exploring making podcasts of our workshops, Barb Mikulec, Institute chair mikulec@telus.net “



MEDIA RELEASE:

Scale up proven public solutions to tackle surgical backlog, says BC Health Coalition

For immediate release May 13, 2020

Vancouver – As the BC government takes steps to address the growing surgical backlog, the BC Health Coalition urges the government to scale up proven public surgery solutions province-wide and cautions against increased use of for-profit surgical clinics.

As a result of the postponement of thousands of non-urgent surgeries due to the COVID-19 pandemic, BC is now facing a large surgical backlog. However, the BC Health Coalition is concerned that the recently announced Surgical Renewal Plan escalates use of for-profit surgical clinic facilities before it puts forward concrete plans to scale up public system improvements that can reduce wait times.

“Ramping up the use of for-profit surgical clinics further entrenches profit-driven health care facilities in BC. And in a time when BC already faces shortage of critical health care practitioners, greater use of for-profit clinics will pull needed health professionals out of the public system, draining our public system of resources as we struggle to recover from the impacts of the pandemic,” warns Edith MacHattie, co-chair of the BC Health Coalition.

Canadian and international evidence shows that public health care is better quality, safer for patients, and more cost-effective.

“The good news is that the government made some bold commitments to public solutions, including expanding public OR (operating room) hours,” said MacHattie. “But BC has the ability to go even further and reduce surgical wait times now and into the future by building upon public innovations that the province has already introduced.”

The BC Health Coalition is calling on government to scale up proven system improvements including:

1. Optimize public hospital capacity before contracting out procedures to for-profit clinics
2. Scale up the five hip and knee central intake and team-based rapid access clinics, announced in 2018
3. Increase O.R. efficiencies like the Richmond Hip and Knee Reconstruction Project by improving the scheduling of surgeries and recovery bed
4. Streamline waitlists by moving them from individual surgeons’ offices to centralized health authority waitlists
5. Improve access to seniors’ home and community care, which can reduce hospital use.

“We know that British Columbians deeply value our public health care system,” said MacHattie. “This is an opportunity to implement proven innovations that will make our public system stronger and more resilient now and into the future.”

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Did you know?



Message from Road Safety BC

“To protect your health and to allow the medical system to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic RoadSafetyBC is temporarily suspending your requirement to have your Drivers Medical Fitness Information (DMRI) completed.”

Please visit www.roadsafetybc.ca for updates and if you have any questions call us at 1-855-387-7747.

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Johnson scholarship program



Since 1998, the Johnson Scholarship Program has awarded over \$1,000,000 in scholarships and academic grants to students across Canada. COSCO members and their children or grandchildren are eligible to apply.

Completed application forms must be submitted by July 15, 2020.

See www.johnson.ca/scholarships for details.

And finally, something to make you smile...

A teacher asked her young students to list what they thought, were the Seven Wonders of the World, hoping that some of the following would appear on their lists:

1. Egypt's great pyramids
2. Taj Mahal
3. Grand Canyon
4. Panama Canal
5. Empire State Building
6. St. Peter's Basilica
7. China's Great Wall



While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one student had not finished her paper yet. So, she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The girl replied,

“Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there were so many.”



The teacher said, “Well, tell us what you have and maybe we can help.”

The girl hesitated, then read: "I think the 'Seven Wonders of the World' are:



The room was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. The things that we overlook as simple and ordinary and that we take for granted are truly wondrous!

Just a gentle reminder that the most precious things in life cannot be built by hand or bought by man, as Dr. Bonnie Henry would say, ***"Be kind, be calm and be safe."***