

## Parksville-Qualicum Beach Community COVID-19 Update

At yesterday's briefing, the provincial Medical Health Officer, Dr Bonnie Hendry, announced a substantial increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in the province over the past weekend. Today's announcement is a reminder that we should remain diligent and continue to work together to stop the spread of the pandemic.

Vancouver Island has had no new infections over the weekend; nine active cases isolating as of October 26 (five in Central Island) and 59 people in quarantine based on contact tracing. The local medical health officer reports contact tracing has limited the transfer of infection. Although Vancouver Island infection numbers are low, we must remain diligent to protect each other. This is not the time to get complacent even though our infections remain far lower than anywhere else in the province.

A new provincial health order limits gatherings in private homes to no more than your immediate household plus your "safe six" (six additional others). This order is necessary because transmission is now occurring within households. This order can be enforced by municipal bylaw and police officers and clear violations of the order may be reported to the RCMP. We hope this will not be necessary and residents will comply with this order; the rules are in place to protect us all.

For the coming winter months, Dr Hendry suggested we should focus on our immediate family and consider having social connections with others in a safe way. This will be a challenge but is something we need to do as a community, so we are able to get through the coming respiratory season and protect ourselves and others in the best possible way.

There is now an expectation, not an order, that masks should be worn when in businesses, workplaces and indoor public spaces, especially in high-traffic areas. Because we cannot always keep a safe distance, masks can provide an extra layer of protection. To be safe, we should feel comfortable wearing a mask at any time.

A reminder to Oceanside residents to help slow the spread of COVID-19:

- Maintain physical distance of at least two metres
- Wash your hands often
- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Do not touch your face
- Avoid large gatherings
- Stay home if sick
- Wear a mask in public spaces
- Be kind, be calm and be safe

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### For more information:

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