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**Subject:** Friday - Interior Health COVID-19 update

**NEXT UPDATE: Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2020.**

**Updated numbers – July 31, 2020**

Interior Health is reporting an additional **nine** COVID-19 cases in IH since our last report yesterday  
Total: 369 cases in total since the start of the pandemic.

Within IH residents, there are **137 cases linked to Kelowna since June 26<sup>th</sup>** - this is an increase in these linked cases from yesterday of seven, which reflects additional information received while investigations are ongoing.

Note: About 60 per cent of the Kelowna-linked cases are considered recovered. IH does not have specific active or recovered cases for Kelowna, as these numbers are fluid, changing as new cases are linked to Kelowna and as additional cases are considered recovered.

We have **no new healthcare workers at KGH** (remains at eight)

We have **no cases currently hospitalized.**

**Statement – Interior Health medical health officer Dr. Silvina Mema**

July long weekend was a reminder that COVID-19 is still in our communities and can spread quickly if we are not respecting public health guidance, especially around gatherings.

The increases in Kelowna started with a relatively small number of positive cases. The spread from these gatherings shows just how important it is to keep to Dr. Bonnie Henry's recommendation of fewer faces, bigger spaces.

Here's what to avoid this August long weekend: large gatherings, especially indoors, of people who don't know each other. We are urging everyone this long weekend to keep your gatherings small; to people you know; to those in your bubble.

Dr. Henry has asked all of us to support each other, encourage our family and friends to #SocializeSafely and to be her voice on social media. We know that we can make a difference in how the pandemic impacts our region, by following public health guidelines. Ask yourselves and each other #WhatWouldDrHenryDo – be a leader and a role model through your actions.

By following public health guidance for gatherings, practices social distancing and the other recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19, then we can have a safe August in Interior Health. We all need to work together to make that possible – starting this long weekend and in the weeks ahead.

The BC Day weekend is **our** weekend. We can make it a memorable one if we socialize safely.

### **Ongoing recommendations from Interior Health:**

#### **Be Safe:**

- Stay home and get tested if you are sick.
- Maintain physical distancing of greater than two metres.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

#### **Have Safe Gatherings:**

- Fewer faces in bigger spaces. Limit your gatherings to small groups and hold them outside.
- Keep gatherings to people you know and keep track of who attends, so we can contact them if someone gets infected. If you host a gathering, assign a designated person to record the names and contact information of those that attend.
- Limiting gathering size in private residences to six people.
- If you have family or friends at risk of severe disease, you should be very careful about attending social gatherings.

#### **Testing:**

- Get tested if you have symptoms – however mild.
- In cases where there are delays, be patient. Public health and lab staff are doing an incredible job over the last few weeks as there has been heightened demand, and they continue to do everything to complete all tests as quickly as possible. These frontline nurses and health care staff are our heroes!

#### **Overdose / Harm Reduction:**

- We continue to see increasingly high levels of overdose activity and concerning drug checking results across the province.

- There is a toxic drug supply out there and people who use drugs need to take precautions:
  - Have a buddy or download the free Lifeguard app;
  - Don't mix substances including pharmaceuticals and alcohol;
  - Use less and pace yourself;
  - Carry naloxone and know how to use it;
  - Access overdose prevention services and supervised consumption where available;
  - Recognize the signs of an overdose: slow or no breathing, gurgling or gasping, lips/fingertips turning blue, difficult to awaken, or non-responsive.
  - If someone is experiencing an overdose or is witnessing an overdose, call 9-1-1.

**Water activities:**

- Public Health Orders are broad in scope and; specific situations need to be considered and decisions made based on circumstances and safety.
- Many of us will be enjoying the water and our beaches this long weekend – the important thing is to be safe: maintain physical distancing and stay home if you're sick, in particular.
- We all need to respect the intent of the provincial health orders. We are relying on people to take extra care and do the right thing. Any larger gatherings – on land or on the lake – with people who are outside your bubble, especially people you do not know, are strongly discouraged right now.
- We have seen that a few gatherings can unintentionally cause a dramatic rise in COVID-19 cases. Let's have a safe long weekend so that we can continue to enjoy summer across our region.