



File: 292-30/PSS-2021-11958

June 22, 2021

Sent via email: justin.piche@uottawa.ca

Justin Piche

Dear Justin Piche:

Re: Request for Access to Records
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA)

I am writing further to your request received by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. Your request is for:

All memorandums, briefing notes, information notes, statistics and powerpoint decks outlining public health authority and health ministry recommendations concerning the prevention, management and treatment of COVID-19 inside correctional institutions in BC. (Date Range for Record Search: From 2/1/2021 To 4/30/2021)

Some information has been withheld pursuant to section 17 (Disclosure harmful to the financial or economic interests of a public body) of FOIPPA. A complete copy of FOIPPA is available online at:

http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96165_00

Your file is now closed.

The records located in response to your request will be delivered through the BC Secure File Transfer Service. Separate emails will follow from the BC SFT Notification Service directing you how to set up an account and where to obtain your records. A guide for using the SFTS is enclosed for your convenience.

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These records will be published on the BC Government's Open Information website a minimum of ten business days after release. To find out more about Open Information, please access the Open Information website at: www.gov.bc.ca/openinformation

If you have any questions regarding your request, please contact Suzanne Kardoush, the analyst assigned to your request, at 778 698-3353. This number can be reached toll-free by calling from Vancouver, 604 660-2421, or from elsewhere in BC, 1 800 663-7867 and asking to be transferred to 778 698-3353.

You have the right to ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review this decision. I have enclosed information on the review and complaint process.

Sincerely,

S. Kardoush

Suzanne Kardoush, Senior FOI Analyst
On behalf of Darlene Kotchonoski, Manager
Justice / Health Team, Information Access Operations

Enclosures

Marsiglia, Isabella PSSG:EX

From: Macpherson, Stephanie PSSG:EX
Sent: February 1, 2021 4:21 PM
To: PSSG ACD HQ Staff; JAG SPSC Correctional Staff; PSSG ACCW All Staff; PSSG NCC All; PSSG OCC All Staff; PSSG PGRCC Staff; PSSG VIRCC Staff; PSSG FRCC All Staff; PSSG FMCC Staff; PSSG KRCC All Staff; PSSG NFPC Staff
Subject: Vaccine Distribution Update

I am writing to provide an update on the status of COVID-19 vaccines for the Adult Custody Division. We were notified this weekend that the Ministry of Health is re-routing vaccines to prioritize vaccination of individuals in custody at outbreak centres. We have been advised that Surrey Pretrial Services Centre (SPSC) has been identified as the priority and we expect that vaccines will be available at SPSC this week.

North Fraser Pretrial Centre (NFPC), and Fraser Regional Correctional Centre (FRCC) have also been identified as priorities and we anticipate that vaccines will be available to individuals in custody at these centres in the very near future.

We have been advised by our health partners that vaccines will be available to all individuals in custody at the three centres with active outbreaks, except for those people who are currently positive for COVID-19, or who have been confirmed to have previously had COVID-19. The Provincial Health Officer further advised that vaccines have been made available to Correctional Health Services (CHS) staff during a limited period over the previous weekend.

While we were hopeful that vaccines would be available to Adult Custody Division staff, we recognize that with a limited supply throughout not only British Columbia but Canada as a whole, the Provincial Health Officer must make evidence-based decisions to prioritize vaccination for those that are the most vulnerable and at the highest risk for contracting the virus. Distribution of the vaccine to individuals in custody is consistent with previous messaging by the PHO and a tremendous step in the right direction as this will only serve to bolster our division's response to this pandemic.

Deputy wardens and health services managers across the province have been planning to prepare for vaccine distribution for several weeks. Management teams at outbreak centres will provide staff with further information outlining vaccine distribution plans and protocols.

The news about vaccine distribution will likely prompt many questions from individuals in custody. The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) is finalizing a communication to answer questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and Correctional Health Services staff will make this available as soon as possible. It is critical that as an organization we ensure those in our custody receive accurate information to dispel myths and encourage informed decision making. Should you wish to learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine I encourage you to visit [Immunize BC](#) for answers to frequently asked questions and [BC's COVID-19 Immunization Plan](#) for details related to BC's immunization plan.

The announcement of vaccine distribution to three lower mainland centres is excellent news for the division; however, we have seen in recent weeks that even with enhanced protocols and an abundance of caution, we remain vulnerable to this virus. As an organization we must continue to remain vigilant and adhere to all established COVID-19 protocols to ensure everyone's safety.

It is important to know that we will continue to advocate for priority vaccination for those working in correctional centres. If you have questions or concerns regarding the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine within your centre, I encourage you to reach out to your management team for information and support.

As always, I am incredibly grateful for your effort and commitment. Thank you for everything you do.

Stephanie Macpherson

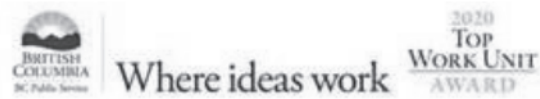
PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY & SOLICITOR GENERAL | BC CORRECTIONS | ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION

OFFICE 778-974-3013 | CELL ^{s.17}

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Marsiglia, Isabella PSSG:EX

From: Macpherson, Stephanie PSSG:EX
Sent: February 16, 2021 4:29 PM
To: PSSG ACD HQ Staff; JAG SPSC Correctional Staff; PSSG ACCW All Staff; PSSG NCC All; PSSG OCC All Staff; PSSG PGRCC Staff; PSSG VIRCC Staff; PSSG FRCC All Staff; PSSG FMCC Staff; PSSG KRCC All Staff; PSSG NFPC Staff
Subject: Vaccine Distribution Update

Good afternoon,

I am writing to follow up on the message I wrote to you within the last couple of weeks, advising that preparations were underway for vaccine distribution in the lower mainland as directed by the Provincial Health Officer.

I am very pleased to let you know that thanks to the incredible planning and agility of our staff, in partnership with Provincial Health Services Authority - Correctional Health Services (CHS), vaccine distribution to individuals in custody has successfully concluded in our lower mainland centres.

Unfortunately, the past weeks have also revealed positive COVID-19 cases in our centres beyond the lower mainland. While the lower mainland and the OCC have been handling complex cases for some time, we are now experiencing signs of increased COVID-19 activity in other areas of the Province. This is a reminder to us all that regardless of physical location, we must stay focussed on safety and engage in the practices that we know will protect us.

I know that the events of recent weeks have generated an immense level of demand and pressure. I want to express my sincere appreciation for your resilience and continued effort. Your hard work and commitment have led us to the tremendous milestones witnessed in our division with the vaccination program.

Thank you for everything that you do.

Stephanie Macpherson

PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR

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Marsiglia, Isabella PSSG:EX

From: Macpherson, Stephanie PSSG:EX
Sent: March 1, 2021 4:30 PM
To: PSSG ACD HQ Staff; JAG SPSC Correctional Staff; PSSG ACCW All Staff; PSSG NCC All; PSSG OCC All Staff; PSSG PGRCC Staff; PSSG VIRCC Staff; PSSG FRCC All Staff; PSSG FMCC Staff; PSSG KRCC All Staff; PSSG NFPC Staff
Subject: Vaccinations Update

Good afternoon,

Several questions have been posed by staff across the province regarding future planning efforts for vaccine distribution within our correctional centres and I am writing today to share the most current information available.

The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) holds the authority for decisions regarding distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine. Due to vaccine shortages both provincially and nationally, the PHO is prioritizing the provinces' most vulnerable populations, and individuals in congregate living settings. Information on the provincial approach to vaccine prioritization can be found within the BC Covid-19 Immunization Plan.

While the Adult Custody Division continues to advocate for our staff to receive priority vaccination status, we recognize that the shortage of vaccines has implications for distribution, and we will continue to follow the direction and guidance of the PHO.

In recent weeks, the PHO directed that vaccines be distributed to the men and women in custody at our lower mainland correctional centres in accordance with the overall vaccination strategy. The notification and roll out of the vaccinations for these centres happened very quickly and coordination at each of the centres was extraordinary.

Following successful clinics at each of these sites, we had the opportunity to provide remaining vaccine doses to correctional staff who were on shift. Centres were incredibly efficient in leveraging this opportunity at a moment's notice, ensuring that excess doses were provided to individuals working in high risk posts first.

Second doses for individuals in custody at our lower mainland centres are a priority, and we have been advised that they will occur within the targeted 42-day timeline. Second doses will also be provided to correctional staff who received the vaccine. At this time, it is unclear if staff will receive second doses at their centres or at an offsite vaccination clinic. We will provide further information to impacted staff members as soon as possible.

Discussions are occurring to explore strategies for ongoing vaccinations at lower mainland centres, targeting new intakes and individuals in custody who were unable to receive the vaccine initially. Currently, there is no established schedule for vaccine distribution at our remaining five centres.

Decisions about vaccine distribution are being made quickly, and we will likely have very little advanced notice about future vaccine availability. Each of our centres have vaccination plans in place. Thanks to the efforts of our staff and our partners at Correctional Health Services we are well prepared to distribute vaccines to individuals in custody moving forward.

I recognize that there are questions that remain unanswered and that we continue to face uncertainty. I am hopeful that the coming months will bring more opportunities for vaccine distribution in our centres, and I will continue to provide you with updates as information becomes available. Thank you for your patience, your continued hard work and commitment.

Stephanie Macpherson

PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY & SOLICITOR GENERAL | BC CORRECTIONS | ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION

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Marsiglia, Isabella PSSG:EX

From: Macpherson, Stephanie PSSG:EX
Sent: March 29, 2021 11:07 AM
To: PSSG ACD HQ Staff; JAG SPSC Correctional Staff; PSSG ACCW All Staff; PSSG NCC All; PSSG OCC All Staff; PSSG PGRCC Staff; PSSG VIRCC Staff; PSSG FRCC All Staff; PSSG FMCC Staff; PSSG KRCC All Staff; PSSG NFPC Staff
Subject: Vaccine Update

Good Morning,

I am writing to provide a status update regarding COVID-19 vaccine distribution within the Adult Custody Division.

Thanks to the efforts and planning of our staff and partners in Correctional Health Services (CHS), all ten centres have now successfully completed vaccine clinics for individuals in our custody. Additionally, upon the direction of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) staff at each of our centres have now been provided the opportunity to receive initial doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

I want to express my sincere gratitude for the commitment and resilience that each of you have demonstrated to support the division in reaching this milestone in our COVID-19 response.

I recognize that receiving the initial vaccine is only one step in protection against COVID-19 and has left many of you with questions regarding plans for second doses. We have been advised that providing a second vaccination for our staff will follow the guidelines established by the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC).

BC's current approach to vaccinations is aligned with recommendations by the Canadian National Advisory Committee on Immunization and aims to balance limited supplies with minimizing serious COVID-19 related outcomes in the population. The Canadian National Advisory Committee on Immunization has recommended that Canadian jurisdictions extend the interval for the second dose to four months based on scientific evidence from clinical trials and real-world experience supporting this approach. You can find further information in BCCDC's [public health statement on deferred second dose](#).

This means that if you have received an initial vaccination you can expect to receive your second dose within a four-month period. At this time, we do not have specific information regarding dates or location for second doses, however, we will continue to provide information as it is made available to us.

To ensure everyone's safety as we await further immunization for staff and individuals in custody, we will maintain all established COVID-19 protocols and procedures. While you may have received your initial vaccine and have a heightened level of protection against the virus, there are many people (staff and those in custody) who have not received their vaccine so continuing to follow all of these protocols is extremely important. Our mitigation strategies have been effective, and by maintaining compliance with hygiene, PPE use, and physical distancing, we will see this through, safely, to the end.

Thank you.

Stephanie Macpherson

PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR

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