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NORTH VANCOUVER'S MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

## COVID-19 Challenges and Community Response

The news we receive daily via TV, radio and the internet can certainly be disheartening. Over the past couple of weeks, we have seen the rapid evolution of something that seemed distant and remote, to something that is significantly impacting our daily lives - threatening our families and our communities.

Here in North Vancouver, we have sadly experienced several deaths from COVID-19 - and have watched as the virus has spread across this country.

Success in confronting and beating the virus depends on a number of important things - one being the active cooperation and participation of all citizens.

### **Necessary precautions**

Vital precautions – including 20-second handwashing with soap and hot water, physical distancing and staying home other than for essential activities - are the best ways to avoid transmission. This is why officials are insisting everyone take these necessary steps. It is critical that we slow the transmission rate to allow our healthcare system to keep up with increased demands.

However, while our current challenges and fears are indeed significant, it is at times like these we have the opportunity to witness the potential goodness of the human spirit – as folks step forward to help in fighting the virus and in assisting those who are vulnerable.

### **Community Response**

Over these past weeks, I have seen examples of individuals and businesses in our community stepping up to help, through providing assistance to other individuals, providing medical supplies, data gathering, providing manufacturing support and other services. Several of these have taken place here in the Lower Mainland and indeed in North Vancouver.

Soon after Prime Minister Trudeau made the public call for companies to step forward to help, several local firms did so. These have included:

- Sinclair Dental – offering procurement and inventory management of medical supplies;
- Deep Cove Brewers & Distillers – offering to create alcohol-based hand sanitizer for North Shore emergency services, hospitals and police;
- the BC Digital Supercluster – looking at how it may assist with the sourcing of protective equipment and other needed supplies

- AG Hair - offering to switch its production lines to pump out hand sanitizer, and
- AbCellera - a Vancouver-based biotech company with leading technology in antibody discovery, which has repurposed its work to focus on collecting data from recovered COVID-19 patients to isolate antibodies for treatment of the virus.

Individuals and community organizations have also stepped forward. Constituents have called and written my office to offer volunteer services to assist in any capacity they can. St. Agnes Anglican Church asked for donations to help a single mother (now out of work) and her two children as she dealt with a medical crisis. Within minutes, twice the requested amount was raised - which meant others needing assistance could also be helped. Grocery stores in local neighbourhoods have established opening times to ensure seniors are protected via the provision of special shopping hours.

I want to very personally thank all of those who have stepped forward with offers to help address the challenges we presently face. Your community-minded actions make me very proud to live here.

### **Things to Consider**

The coming weeks will certainly continue to present challenges for all of us. During this time, I encourage all of us to consider two things:

- **Take appropriate precautions to ensure that you are personally doing what is necessary to keep our community safe – this includes washing your hands often for 20 seconds with soap and water, practicing appropriate physical distancing and going out to public places only when truly necessary, and**
- **Think about how you can personally be part of ensuring that our community can endure through current challenges. This would include things as simple as ensuring your neighbors are okay or offering to buy groceries for the senior who lives down your street.**

For additional information relating to the virus and measures being taken to address it, please go to [canada.ca/covid19](http://canada.ca/covid19).

We need to ensure we are acting responsibly and are present to support each other. If we do these things, we will get through this together.

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