

SALN

Self Advocate Leadership Network

April 15, 2020

SALN COVID-19 News-sheet #3

This News-sheet is a public document. Information, quotes and questions are invited to be shared and included outside of SALN.

1. SALN would like to share the following:

1. Participation House in Markham, Ontario – “Dozens of workers walked out of Participation House, leaving adults with disabilities with little to no care after an outbreak of COVID-19.” – Kamil Karamali from Global News

Media Links:

April 10, 2020 Link: [Global News: Staff walked out of Markham group home after residents test positive for COVID-19.](#)

April 14, 2020 Link: [Updated Global News: Coronavirus: ‘Critical’ staffing levels remain at Markham group home where most staff walked out](#)

SALN Comment:

- “SALN would like to say that our hearts go out to Participation House. SALN is thinking about the residents and staff that are still there. SALN hopes that everyone gets the support they need to be safe.”

Quotes from SALN members:

- “I have worry and concern for us. Are we going to see it hit places like this here in BC? At group homes, how are the staff and supports going to be able to handle it to keep people safe?”
- “These people need support.”
- “My worry and concern is here in B.C. What supports are in place for situations like that here?”
- “My heart is breaking for the people with disabilities.”
- “Nothing surprises me – staff don’t get paid enough, not enough income and not enough supplies. [I am feeling] Upset, disgusted, angry. Every time we try to advocate for something - we think we are on the right track and then something disturbing like this happens.”

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2. Dr. Smith, Provincial Health Officer Assistant Deputy's message, "Homes and families should not intermingle very much is the advice. Find other ways to stay connected."

SALN Comment:

- SALN supports Dr. Smith.

Quotes from SALN members:

- "This is a tough one. People need their family, they are scared."
- "This is tricky as some people don't get anything from Zoom or calls. It may be harder for them to stay connected in other ways. It should be case by case. Generally, try to stay away – but be flexible and creative, person by person. It was extremely important for me to see people in person when I was self-isolating. To hang out, visit, talk and see people through my window."
- "Some people need the sense of seeing people even though they can't touch them."
- "Health and safety is the most important thing. People with disabilities, everyone, should be doing what the province and country are asking."
- People can be creative on how they stay connected in person to family and people they care about but stay safe – that includes everyone:
 - Drive by visits
 - "Car Parade" visits.
 - Setting up short visits while you are far away from the person. (More than 6 feet!)
 - Visit through glass doors and window. Touching hands through the glass.

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3. If a person chooses to leave their staffed home to live with family during the crisis – how should they be supported?

SALN Comment:

- SALN supports CLBC to expect service providers to be creative and find ways to support people and families who choose to move from where they live and stay with families. Some families can support people on their own through this – others cannot. It should be figured out on a case by case basis. Each situation is different. Health and safety must come first.
- We are supporting CLBC and service providers to look at each situation case by case. There needs to be decision making and support that it is inclusive.

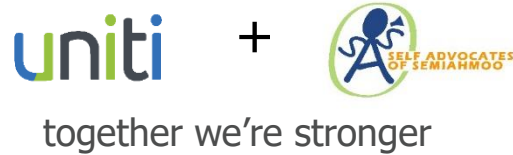
Quotes from SALN members:

- “If someone is being taken home to stay with family for safety issues but needs full supervision...this is tricky. If family can't manage – then they need to receive some help. But if they are managing and trying it first [then they do not need it] – because there may not be enough staff to go around. If people HAVE to go home for safety – that is different, support needs to go with them for safety, medical, health.”
- “We chose to move my son from home share to live with his grandparents – it is the choice we made as a family...we know that all his support is on us – the family – for a while. If families are going to do this and make this decision, they need to think very carefully about what will be expected and what they can realistically do – because this will be for the long haul and they need to really think if they can do it.”
- “Some people are choosing to move because of fear. Making a decision that is not informed. Families need to be informed and ensure they are equipped to support their family member.”
- “If service providers are providing support in the homes – they have to make sure there is enough staff to go around to avoid cross contamination.”

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4. SALN would like to re-share the UNITI and SAS COVID-19 Response Videos



COVID-19 Pandemic: A Self-Advocate Voice in Support of the Community Surrey, BC: Four videos on the Coronavirus have been produced by people with disabilities to share with their community, Canada and the world. The Self-Advocates of Semiahmoo, SAS, with the financial support of UNITI created the videos to highlight the importance of our actions in this time. What we do affects others and we have the choice to be there for everyone in getting through this safely.

SAS is a community organization that has 25 active members who all identify as having a disability. SAS makes changes through positive relationships. SAS has been federally recognized for their work on the Canadian Accessibility Act and for bringing beach wheelchairs to White Rock Beach, in collaboration with the City of White Rock and Feral Boardsports, and Crescent Beach, in collaboration with the City of Surrey.

UNITI is the partnership of three affiliated societies that have provided important community services for decades. One affiliate, Semiahmoo House Society provides quality services and supports to people with disabilities and their families in Surrey and White Rock. Together we're stronger.

Coronavirus: Fair Treatment

People with disabilities are here to share their message during the Coronavirus pandemic. During this time and always, it is important that all people have ... Fair Treatment.

[#StaySafe](#) [#DisabilityRights](#) [#Coronavirus](#)
[#StayHome](#) [#StaySafeStayHome](#) [#COVID19](#) [#UNITI4ALL](#)

Coronavirus: Affects Us All

People with disabilities are here to share their message during the Coronavirus pandemic. During this time let's remember, this Affects Us All.

[#StaySafe](#) [#DisabilityRights](#) [#Coronavirus](#)
[#StayHome](#) [#StaySafeStayHome](#) [#COVID19](#) [#UNITI4ALL](#)

Coronavirus: Stay Home

People with disabilities are here to share their message during the Coronavirus pandemic. During this time let's remember, please... Stay Home.

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[#StayHome](#) [#StayHomeStaySafe](#) [#COVID19](#) [#UNITI4ALL](#)

Coronavirus: We're in this Together

People with disabilities are here to share their message during the Coronavirus pandemic. During this time let's remember, ... We're in this Together.

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[#StayHome](#) [#StaySafeStayHome](#) [#COVID19](#) [#UNITI4ALL](#)

Facebook: [@SemiahmooHouseSociety](#) [@SelfAdvocateSAS](#)

Instagram: [@self_advocates_of_semiahmoo](#)

Twitter: [@SemiahmooHouse](#)

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2. SALN would like to be informed of the following:

1. To CLBC and Service Provider agencies, how are you going to support people if they can't stay in their home? (To help BC be prepared for what happened in Ontario.)

Please invite SALN to participate in creating and delivering solutions where it makes sense. Response can be sent to SALN support, Jillian Glennie, at sas@shsbc.ca.