



PULMONARY HYPERTENSION  
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

L'ASSOCIATION D'HYPERTENSION  
PULMONAIRE DU CANADA

March 17, 2020

Dear PHriends,

Like you, we have been watching news of the escalating global outbreak of novel coronavirus – known as COVID-19 – with great concern. We understand that you may be worried about your own health and the health of your loved ones. We appreciate the unique vulnerabilities faced by those with chronic illness, especially those who are elderly, have multiple complex conditions, or have received transplant. We want you to know that PHA Canada is taking this situation seriously and remains fully available to support you and your family.

We have been providing the PH community with sources of reliable [information](#) about the outbreak since January. For timely and accurate information about the virus – including transmission in Canada and travel advisories – we continue to encourage you to visit [www.canada.ca/covid-19](http://www.canada.ca/covid-19). For information about local transmission and public health recommendations, please consult with your local health authorities/agencies, such as the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) or [Ontario Public Health](#). We also recognize your need for information specifically for folks with chronic lung/heart conditions and encourage you to seek out credible sources of information, such as this [handout](#) from the BCCDC or this [blog posting](#) from Dr. Sanjay Mehta, PHA Canada Director and Medical Advisor.

We also want to share with you how PHA Canada's operations will be affected by the outbreak over the coming weeks. *First*, participation by staff and volunteers in public events and in-person meetings is currently on hold. Participation in future events will be determined as necessary and with full consideration for the safety and wellbeing of all participants. *Second*, starting today, staff will be supported to work from home and all staff meetings will take place via videoconference. To reach us, please continue to call/email us during normal business hours. *Finally*, we remain fully available to PH patients, caregivers, and health care providers to provide support, education, and advocacy. Likewise, awareness activities – such as the upcoming World PH Day – and our efforts to promote PH research in Canada will continue uninterrupted.

This is a worrisome and challenging time for all of us, but we are heartened by two things in particular: the strength of our public services in Canada, and the collective actions being taken by communities to protect and support one another. This is the time to heed the advice of public health agencies and all do our part to reduce the risks to our most vulnerable community members and to our health care system. The health care providers working on the frontlines deserve both our gratitude and our help in stemming the tide of this pandemic. We must also choose compassion and respect for human rights, for racism and xenophobia will only serve to alienate people at-risk and worsen the outbreak. And, in the midst of our own potential anxieties and self-isolation, we must leverage the advantages of technology to stay informed, supported, and connected.

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A better life for all Canadians affected by pulmonary hypertension. | Une vie meilleure pour tous les Canadiens touchés par l'hypertension pulmonaire.



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So, if you are in need of support or assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out to us by phone (1-877-774-2226) or email ([info@phacanada.ca](mailto:info@phacanada.ca)). And for on-going updates, please visit our [website](#), subscribe to our [e-newsletter](#), and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

Stay safe. Stay calm. We will all get through this together.

Sincerely,

Roberta Massender  
Chair, Board of Directors

Jamie Myrah  
Executive Director