



HSA Makes Recommendations to Pandemic Response Review

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Union urges changes based on front line pandemic experience of members

In a submission to the BC government's official review of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Health Sciences Association of BC has urged the BC government to consider a number of recommendations related to improve infection control measures, workplace safety and professional shortages.

HSA's submission to the "COVID-19 Lessons Learned Review", an independent review and public consultation on the province's response to the pandemic, is based on front line experience of members in diverse professions, and reiterates many concerns already raised in direct talks with government since the initial outbreak.

[HSA's full submission can be read on our website.](#)

The submission sums up a number of concerns that HSA has been raising with the BC government for over two years now, and include:

- Lack of engagement and communication when Provincial Health Office orders conflict with established labour relations practice and negotiated collective agreements.
- The Single Site Order, while initially helping control spread of infection, continues to restrict collective agreement rights for some members despite a very different pandemic context.
- Insufficient time to prepare for mandatory vaccination orders, which might have reduced the number of staff terminations.
- Poor distribution of temporary pandemic pay.
- Lack of infection prevention measures that acknowledge aerosol spread, and difficulties in accessing N95 respirators.
- Poor communication over changes to infection control guidelines.
- Lack of presumptive coverage for mental health claims for professionals working in health sciences and community social services.
- Restricted access to PCR and rapid testing for all health care workers.
- Ongoing, acute shortages of specialized professionals made far worse by pandemic workload, burnout, and resignation.
- The importance of not overwhelming the public health care system by reducing community transmission.

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