

COVID-19 Status

APRIL 21, 2020

We have confirmed 105 new cases of COVID-19 over the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 2,908. Of the total cases, we suspect 559 cases may be the result of community transmission, 149 have been hospitalized and 40 have been in an Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Currently, there are 63 cases in hospital, with 15 in an ICU. 1,230 cases have now recovered.

3,718 tests were completed over the last 24 hours, bringing our total COVID-19 tests to 100,898 since the start of the pandemic.

Four Albertans have passed away in the last 24 hours in the North, Edmonton and Calgary zones. The impact of these losses is felt each time we report them. These people were valued and loved and we offer our sincere condolences to the family members, loved ones and healthcare workers who are grieving them today. To date, there have been 59 deaths in Alberta related to COVID-19.

Things You Need to Know

Tribute to Lives Lost in Nova Scotia

As Alberta, along with provinces and territories across Canada, deals with the unimaginable loss of life due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we turn our thoughts and prayers to our friends, family and colleagues in Nova Scotia. The tragic and incomprehensible loss of life in the small rural community of Portapique following a mass shooting Sunday would be difficult at any time, but feels even more heartbreaking and terrible in our current reality.

Many of the lives lost are those on whom we've come to rely so heavily during this pandemic – healthcare workers, law enforcement officers, paramedics, firefighters, and teachers.

Alberta Health Services grieves with you, Nova Scotia.

As a tribute to those who were taken so suddenly, AHS is encouraging our staff and all Albertans to share a moment of silence at 7 p.m. Tuesday evening. Please join one another – while physically distancing – on your balconies, patios, porches, front lawns, or in your work place if you can, to honour our friends and family in Nova Scotia. Albertans can also pay tribute on social media using the hashtag #NovaScotiaStrong.

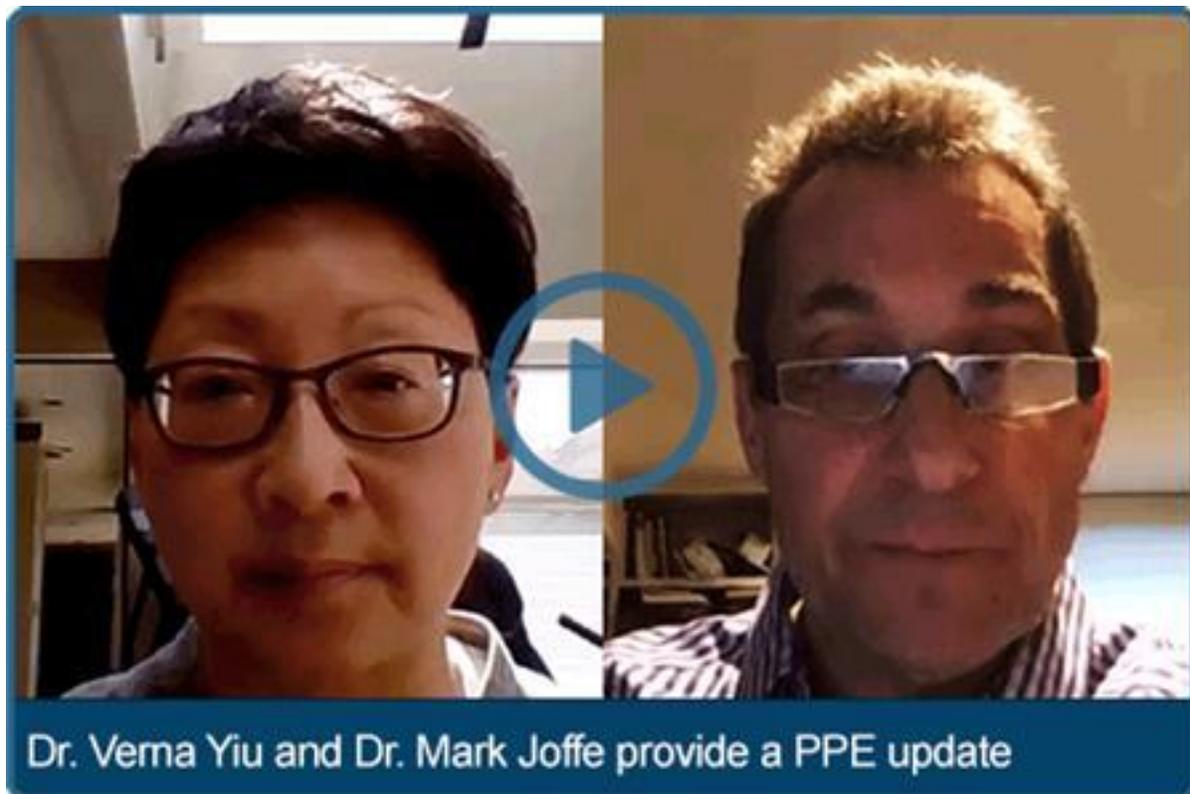
Alberta Health Services and the Government of Alberta have lowered our flags at all of our sites and facilities to half-mast, in remembrance of those who have been lost.

Single Site Employment for Long-Term Care and Supportive Living Deadline

Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health, earlier this month put in place [an order on single site employment](#) for Long Term Care and Designated Supportive Living (LTC/DSL). The order comes into effect April 23, 2020. As part of preparations for implementation, employees who work in LTC/DSL can indicate their preferred work site.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Update

AHS staff and physicians have raised concerns about some of the new PPE they are using — concerns about fit, concerns about odour, concerns about its effectiveness in protecting them from COVID-19. [In this video](#), AHS President and CEO Dr. Verna Yiu asks Dr. Mark Joffe — AHS Vice President & Medical Director of CancerControl Alberta, Clinical Support Services & Provincial Clinical Excellence — several questions about the new PPE, including how staff and physicians can raise concerns about the supplies.



We hope you watch the video, but if time doesn't permit, please know that we are taking your concerns very seriously and acting on them immediately. There are two brands of masks that are new to our health care workers. We have heard from our front line teams that they are concerned about the fit, and in particular that the nose pieces for one of the brands is uncomfortable and doesn't fit as well as it should. We want to reassure all of our front line care providers that we are addressing their concerns immediately. We are working with the suppliers to have the nose pieces adjusted, increasing the length of the mask (from nose to chin) for a better fit.

We have already taken steps to reduce the odors from the masks that occurs as a result of the masks being shrink packed right after manufacture. The manufacturer will package these in fold seal to allow for air movement in the masks. Until then, masks will be unpacked from the plastic before sending to our sites to allow the masks time to breathe.

All of our PPE meets the required safety standards. All products are tested prior to being ordered and then are inspected again before they are supplied to our sites. The procedural masks that have raised concerns this weekend were tested on March 17, before being shipped to Alberta. They were tested by a well-recognized laboratory in China that does most of the standards testing. The testing was done for EU Standards EN14683 Type II and Type II R. which is consistent with an ASTM Level 1 and 2. The results showed that the masks meet standard.

AHS also re-examines all the products upon arrival to ensure that there are no defects.

So even though we know that the products meet standard, we must still address the issues being raised by our front line staff, and we are. We have created a quality control group for any new models or products within AHS that will include front line employees and union representatives and will essentially field test new models. We do need to broaden out our PPE suppliers to meet the demands for continuous masking within AHS and the broader front line community.

PPE Tip of the Day

The daily series - *PPE Tip of the Day* – features quick and simple reminders you can take forward into your practice, from shift to shift.

Don't touch your mask with your hands. If you do touch your mask with your hands, dispose of the mask and immediately [wash your hands](#).

Physician PPE Webinar

Thank you to the nearly 300 physicians who participated in last week's webinar regarding PPE, COVID-19 modelling and Virtual Health. This webinar, [now available online](#), provides an update to clinicians regarding the latest evidence and best practice when it comes to PPE use in clinical contexts. The second segment focuses on COVID-19 modelling and how Alberta fits in the Canadian context. The final segment discusses how clinicians can use and access Virtual Health to support patient care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Supports for Healthcare Aides

The Alberta government announced increased funding today to support staffing of healthcare aides, to alleviate pressures in contracted continuing care facilities.

Continuing care facilities have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why strong restrictions are in place to address the spread of the virus. These restrictions are necessary to help protect lives, but they also place financial and emotional burdens on staff, residents and operators.

Increased funding will help facilities hire approximately 1,000 additional full-time staff, so they can adequately prevent infections and respond to outbreaks. The addition of 1,000 practicum students will also help deal with staffing shortages across the system. A wage supplement will help compensate healthcare aides at contracted sites for the extra work necessary during this pandemic. It will also help alleviate the financial burden for those who normally work at several sites, but are now restricted to one site.

In the Zones

Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC) Update – North

AHS Public Health in the North Zone is currently working with Alberta Health and work camp operators to provide testing for all work camp staff at Kearn Lake – north of Fort McMurray. This is a preventive and voluntary measure, and provides us an opportunity to identify additional COVID-19 transmission at the site.

North Zone staff continue to work to address and provide support in response to COVID-19 case outbreaks. Our North Zone Medical Officer of Health (MOH), Dr. Kathryn Koliaska, and zone senior leadership participated in a town hall with the families of Manoir du Lac residents, on Saturday, April 19 via Zoom. There were more than 140 attendees. The MOH and our senior zone leaders addressed questions and concerns. There are plans to hold another town hall in the coming days.

Meanwhile, Addiction and Mental Health teams are ensuring clients in Peace River continue to receive the care they need under added pressures. North ZEOC was notified Saturday night that overland flooding caused damage to the Peace River Addiction and Mental Health Clinic (Powell Building). The building was closed at the time, and clients and staff were not there. The building will remain closed until it is deemed safe to return. Peace River Addiction and Mental Health clinic staff will continue to provide addiction and mental health services and support to clients by telephone and virtually. Addiction and Mental Health site leadership are working to set up an alternative work location for staff affected by the flooding.

We continue to see so many encouraging and heartwarming signs of gratitude in communities across the North Zone, as demonstrated in the physically distanced, jersey day photo below. These events inspire our teams to continue working hard, supporting each other, and more importantly, delivering high-quality patient care.



Staff at Grande Prairie's Child and Youth Addiction and Mental Health office in Grande Prairie celebrated Jersey Day with some physical distancing.

Be Well - Be Kind

Shout Out

Recreational Therapists in Central Zone are doing amazing work, together with families and communities, to keep our precious long-term care residents connected to the people and, sometimes even animals, that matter to them most.

The photo below was sent to a Central Zone recreational therapy leader by a long-term care resident, with a message, which said *"That sure made my day! I was starting to get claustrophobic in my room. Who knew Recreation Therapy could be life-saving?"* The leader who received the message was so moved and grateful for the incredible work, innovation and compassion of our teams. Thank you for sharing this touching example of the kind of care our people provide.



Community Acts of Kindness

Our youngest Albertans continue to demonstrate their genuine and profound appreciation for AHS teams across the province in very meaningful ways.

In Calgary, a group of Scouts have created a video of heartfelt thanks, which can be seen [here](#). It features drawings by these young artists, which salute your efforts to protect Albertans. As the song in the video reminds us, together we are making the world a better place.

Many of the scouts who created this video belong to a Catholic parish, which is also demonstrating its appreciation for the work you are doing through a campaign by the Calgary Diocese. This includes ringing the church bells daily from 7:00-7:05 p.m. daily to honour you, downloadable posters or postcards for people to share or display, and a day of prayer for healthcare workers. More information on this campaign is available [here](#).

Meanwhile, seven-year-old Nataliya has captured her appreciation for her heroes in this drawing dedicated to her mom, Karina, and other nurse-heroes.



Psychosocial Disaster Network (PDN) Newsletter - April 2020

Attached is the PDN Newsletter for April and the following documents:

- Psychosocial Capacity Building
- PolicyWise for Children & Families
- Mental Health and Psychosocial Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Mental Health and Psychosocial Recovery after COVID-19
- Considerations for Supports and Services
- Considerations for a Provincial Response
- Principles for Psychosocial Recovery

We have started our seventh week in our coordinated effort to stop the spread of this pandemic in Alberta. Thank you for your constant and tireless work to keep Albertans safe. They appreciate all you are doing, from the youngest to the oldest in our province, as evidenced in the messages we've shared today. We stand beside you with admiration and the utmost respect for your expertise, dedication and determination.

Thank you and stay safe.

Please Note: This message has been modified from the AHS Daily Updates.

*****Please share this information as appropriate*****

*****For Alberta Health Services – Indigenous specific questions/concerns please email ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca *****

*****For Indigenous Services Canada please email sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca *****

Josipa Pavicic on behalf of Nadine McRee

Mental Health and Psychosocial Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic



Large scale crises and disasters, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, affect the mental health and psychosocial well-being of individuals and communities.

Like other epidemics, the current COVID-19 pandemic involves:

Fear of the unknown, infection, job loss, death

Fear for loved ones

Disruption to routine and normalcy

Social isolation

Living in a prolonged state of stress

Over the short- and long-term, these conditions can lead to:

Inability to focus, anxiety, and panic

Loneliness and depression

Relationship and family conflict

Disruption to community connection and social fabric

Alberta has shown resilience in the face of adversity before.

Living through crisis can yield transformation and positive growth, including deeper relationships, more connected communities, and resilience for future challenges.

How psychosocial responses are managed is critical to community recovery.

Psychosocial supports should:

Be early, rapid, and efficient

Create opportunities for mutual support in the community

Listen to the demands of people in their own spaces

Be sustainable in the mid- to long-term

Mental Health and Psychosocial Recovery after COVID-19

Considerations for Supports and Services

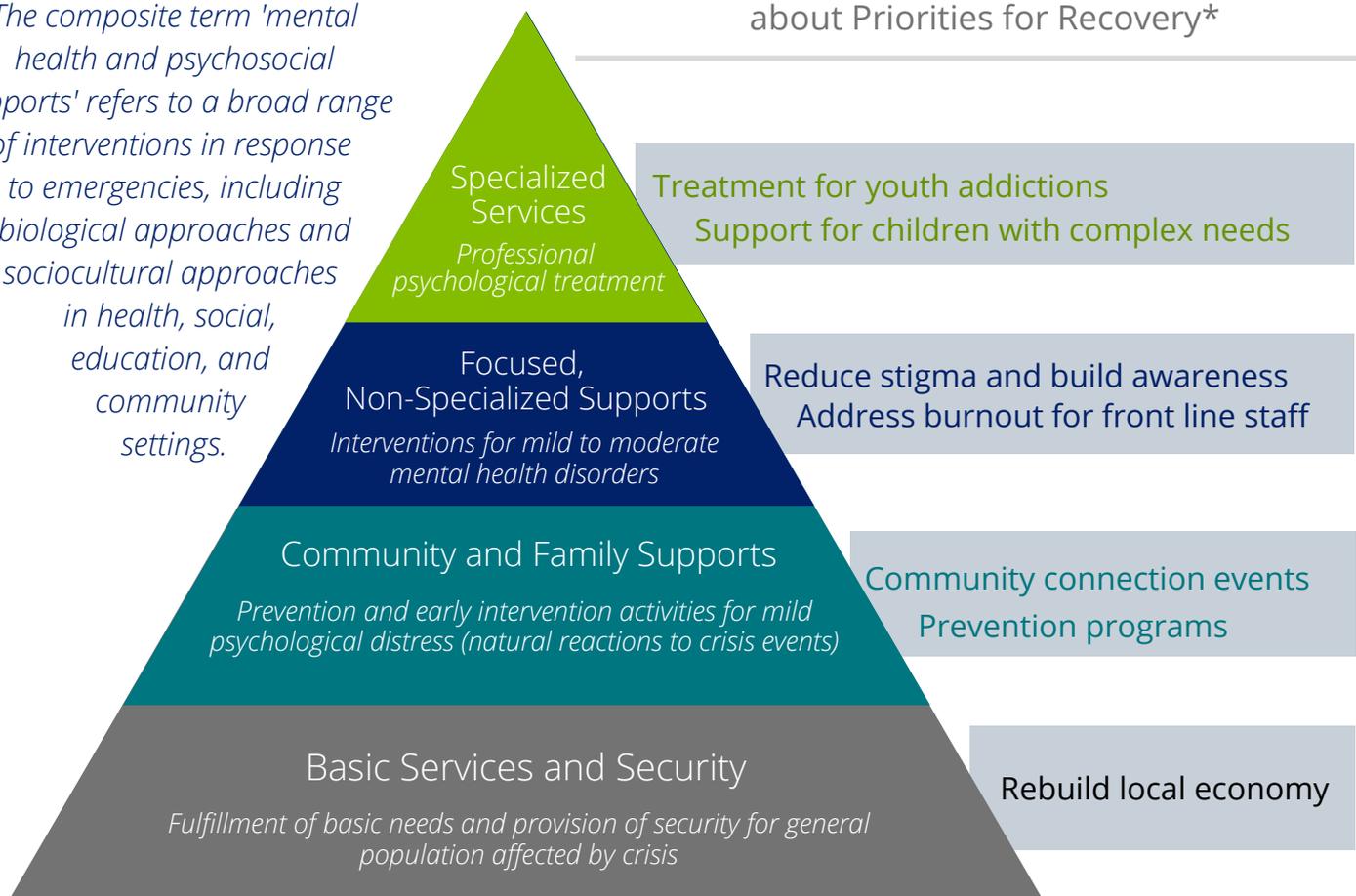


Similar to other natural disasters and large scale crises, the COVID-19 pandemic will have an ongoing impact on individual and community mental health and psychosocial well-being. Here are some key lessons from research and Alberta's own experience about priority psychosocial supports and services to support recovery.

Considerations for Mental Health and Psychosocial Supports in Response to COVID-19

The composite term 'mental health and psychosocial supports' refers to a broad range of interventions in response to emergencies, including biological approaches and sociocultural approaches in health, social, education, and community settings.

Lessons Learned from Communities about Priorities for Recovery*



This pyramid of intervention was developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (2010)

*Lessons learned from research and engagement with Alberta communities recovering from natural disaster
Sources: [IASC, 2007](#); [IASC, 2020](#); [Kulig, J., GermAnn, K., Parker, N., Salt, V., Walker, D., & Scott, C., 2017](#)

For more information please contact PolicyWise for Children & Families at:

Info@policywise.com

Mental Health and Psychosocial Recovery after COVID-19

Considerations for a Provincial Response



Similar to other natural disasters and large scale crises, the COVID-19 pandemic will have an ongoing impact on individual and community mental health and psychosocial well-being. Here are some key lessons from research and Alberta's own experiences about the pillars of a provincial response that will be foundational for recovery.

Pillars for a Provincial Psychosocial Response to COVID-19



Common Purpose & Principles

Shared goal to prevent pathology and promote psychological health and well-being



Knowledgeable, Stable & Skilled Workforce

Stability for front line and support staff with knowledge and skills for psychosocial recovery



Leadership & Commitment

Leaders across key sectors and all levels coordinate and commit to psychosocial recovery



Ongoing Learning & Adaptation

Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting for ongoing improvement and adaptability



Respectful, Trusting Relationships

Strengths-based partnerships among local connectors, agencies, and governments



Infrastructure and Resources

Processes, systems and resources to support effective functioning and quality services

Source: [Kulig, J., GermAnn, K., Parker, N., Salt, V., Walker, D., & Scott, C., 2017](#)

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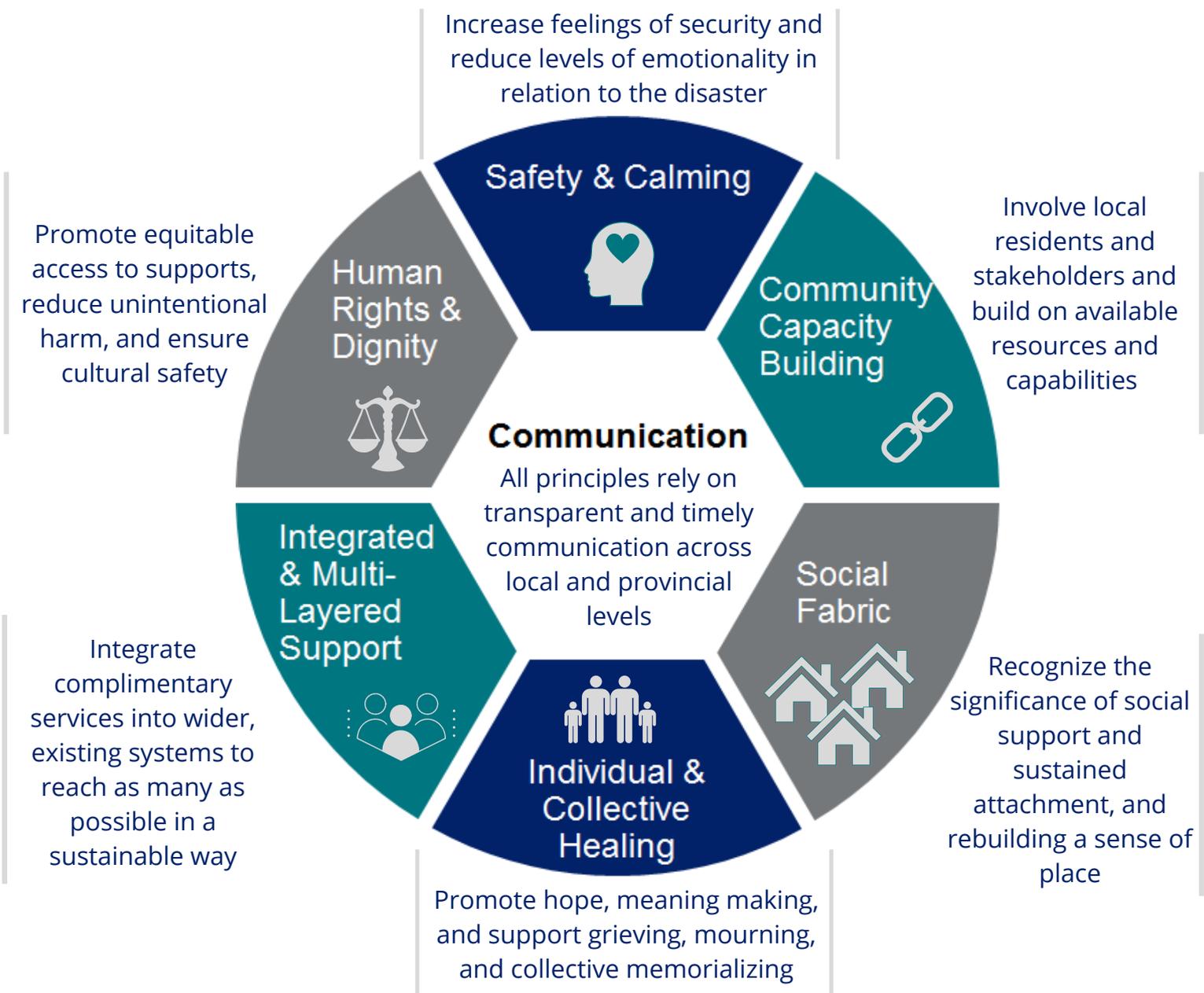
Mental Health and Psychosocial Recovery after COVID-19

Principles for Psychosocial Recovery



Similar to other natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic will have an ongoing impact on mental health and well-being. Here are some key lessons from research and Alberta's own experiences about principles for psychosocial response and recovery.

Principles for a Provincial Psychosocial Response to COVID-19



Source: [Kulig, J., Germann, K., Parker, N., Salt, V., Walker, D., & Scott, C., 2017](#)

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