



March 24, 2020 COVID-19 UPDATE

Main Street Project's current priorities:

1. Working to open the Mitchell Fabrics facility further, as well as Salvation Army at 72 Martha first floor, as additional shelter spaces to ensure we are meeting social distancing recommendations from the Federal Government and World Health Organization. We are advocating as part of the larger shelter working group to look at the needs of the increased number of individuals who are rough sleeping, individuals who cannot access other spaces (as other spaces are reducing) and those who may need specialized supports.
2. As other services close or provide modified services and/or schedules, there is an increase in the number of individuals who are not able to access facilities in order to meet basic needs. Our outreach programming will be expanded, though modified, to ensure safety for all. The discussions we are having with community members centers around preparedness planning and self-assessments to meet basic needs as they face more barriers due to the current COVID-19 crisis.
3. We are working on developing systemic coordination of communication with hospitals and other community health facilities specific to the vulnerable sector and in regards to people who may be tested, require testing and or received COVID-19 test results.
4. Working to create isolation opportunities for people who may need to meet isolation requirements or are awaiting COVID-19 test results. This is in partnership with Shared Health, Manitoba Housing, End Homelessness Winnipeg and the other shelters. We are looking to best maximize spaces that are available and meet the needs of the vulnerable population.
5. Safe supply and safe consumption agendas must be moved forward as we explore the above accommodations and realities through a harm reduction framework to support people who use substances through COVID-19 and beyond. This includes current discussion with Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries in regards to access to supply.
6. We continue to champion the need for community and mobile proactive testing in discussions. Currently the screening process criteria may exclude, or include too broadly, some of the health symptoms marginalized populations face. We know that the population MSP serves is at high risk for community based transmission, and would take



place in combination with underlying and co-occurring health issues. We are suggesting multiple community-based ways to partner and enable proactive testing in combination with the accommodations required to support this testing for unsheltered community members.

7. Supply and access to essential supplies such as Personal Protective Equipment and alcohol-based hand sanitizer for front line staff working in essential shelter services. The inclusion of shelter, housing and outreach services in the provisions for health care will be paramount to assisting in the containment of community based transmission. We have implemented additional environmental planning for cleanliness.
8. The expansion of all services, access to new spaces and creation of programs will undoubtedly need operating money to ensure we have trained, safe and professional staff (including peers) who are able to continue to provide services to community members.
9. The continuation of weekly Main Street Project's Food Bank with some modifications. Last week 150 hampers were provided to those in need. We are working closely with restaurants and other food donors to keep food stocked.

These are the top priorities we are advocating for to meet the immediate needs of Main Street Project and the community we serve. Please contact us if you have any questions by emailing admin@mainstreetproject.ca.

- **Main Street Project COVID-19 Response Team**