

COVID-19



We need our 13th Man

Editorial – Dr. Susan Shaw, Chief Medical Officer,
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Our world is a different place than it was just a few weeks ago.

Routine activities like grocery shopping have turned surreal, with people dancing around each other in super market aisles in a box step to maintain their distance.

As a physician, I stand behind the province's prescription of social distancing for every citizen of Saskatchewan. I never thought I'd see the day when people physically avoiding each other was a positive development. It's not just positive right now, it's absolutely necessary.

Earlier this week I was involved in a news conference discussing modelling data that informs our preparations and decisions within the Saskatchewan Health Authority to best respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. It included mortality rates and hospitalization rates ranging into the thousands. It was a sobering wake up call.

Like everything in health care, the data is based on planning for the worst while striving for the best. Normally, however, those of us who are health care providers have more influence on the results. Not for COVID-19.

Unchecked by the restraints of social distancing and other isolation measures, a single person infected with COVID-19 can ultimately result in over 59,000 cases of COVID-19 as it is passed along from person to person over time. No health system in the world can withstand this pressure when multiplied over an entire population.

That is why it is up to you. Our health system will be there for you if you are there for us.

Social distancing, following all isolation and gathering restrictions, and washing your hands regularly does cut the transmission numbers drastically. It also delays the spread over time so it is manageable for our health system.

Those of us who work in health care don't have the option to stay home unless unwell. It is our job to continue to come to work even when other places close. We are an essential service; our society needs us. That is both our burden and our gift.

We are asking our employees to take the time and effort to protect themselves because of this essential service we provide.

But we need you to do the same.

We need Rider Nation to be our 13th man on the field. We need you to limit the spread. We need you to take this seriously, stay home whenever and wherever possible, and make every effort you can to avoid contracting and spreading COVID-19.

If you can delay the spread of COVID-19 in our communities, we can tackle it. If you do your part, we can do ours. We're all in this together.



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March 2020