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We Save Lives, So Can You.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS - EFFORTS, WARNINGS AND REQUESTS TO PROVIDE URGENT MITIGATION TO SERIOUS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GAPS WITHIN TORONTO SHELTERS BETWEEN OCTOBER 22, 2020 AND NOVEMBER 2, 2020 - RESULTING IN NO RESPONSE FROM SSHA, SEATON HOUSE AND ROBERTSON HOUSE

1. October 22, 2020 - Heart2Heart CPR launches national press release: [\(SEE HERE\)](#)

This in-depth article provides detailed information regarding serious structural gaps in shelter standards that may be linked to all-time high deaths in shelters. We also mention that there are serious breakdowns in full PPE and lifesaving protective equipment critical for certified staff to provide first aid and CPR safely during opioid crisis.

2. October 24th, 2020 - First Direct Letter - From Nick Rondinelli, CEO to the following people:

- a) **Ms. Mary-Anne Bédard**, General Manager of SSHA mary-anne.bedard@toronto.ca
- b) **Mr. Gordan Tanner, Director** (SSHA), gord.tanner@toronto.ca
- c) **Ms. Waldman**, Manager of **Seaton House**, monica.waldman@toronto.ca
- d) **Mr. Yoder**, Manager of **Robertson House** shawn.yoder@toronto.ca
- e) **Ms. Shepherd**, Manager of **Drug Strategy City of Toronto**, susan.shepherd@toronto.ca
- f) **Ms. Gillson**, Executive Director of **Toronto Hostels Training Centre**, ruth@thtcentre.com

Key Excerpts from First Letter:

*I wanted to alert you to the fact that staff at shelters (and likely other homeless services, safe injection, and harm reduction sites in the city) are **taking the wrong course** as it relates to dealing with drug overdoses, particularly opioid overdoses.*

*The City's current standard for First Aid & CPR training, equipment, and number of staff required to be certified as per City guidelines is **simply not enough**. There are serious breakdowns in policies that may be directly impacting the high number of fatalities that we are seeing today in our shelters.*

In particular to Shelters and other homeless services where there is a higher risk of potential overdoses, a Bag Valve Mask (BVM) and an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) are extremely

vital to have. **In addition to these are other personal protective equipment (PPE) such as surgical /procedure mask, isolation gown, and eye protection (google or face shield).**

It is also clear that having only 1 staff trained per location, per shift, **is not adequate.** There should be at minimum, two (2) staff trained on-site at all times and both trained and certified to the Basic Life Support level.

I have decided to implement a social entrepreneurship branch of my company, **Heart to Heart First Aid CPR Services Inc.,** called **THE JOHNSTON-BRAIS INITIATIVE.** It is a task force to provide education, awareness, and best practices for the unique and challenging circumstances that shelter staff and outreach workers face each day.

THE JOHNSTON-BRAIS INITIATIVE will provide **FREE** Canadian Red Cross training and certification in "Basic Life Support" (including naloxone administration and overdose prevention strategies) and donate 2 adult BVM's to all shelters located within Toronto (additionally 1 child BVM and 1 infant BVM for family shelters).

I would like to schedule a meeting to further discuss this with you **as soon as possible.** Thanks in advance for your time to discuss **this life-threatening crisis** we have before us and **our commitment to using my resources and team of experts and trainers to push this forward as quickly as possible so we can start saving lives immediately.**

OUTCOME TO FIRST LETTER: NO RESPONSE from SSHA, Seaton House, Robertson House, or Toronto Hostels Training. Ms. Shepherd did reply notifying that they **do not** have a role in establishing medical protocols and to contact SSHA.

3. November 2, 2020 – Second Letter from Nick Rondinelli, CEO to the Same City Officials

Key Excerpts from Second Letter:

***This is my second attempt in reaching out to you regarding a very serious and urgent matter pertaining to our shelter's residents and serious breakdowns in policy that has a direct impact to the high death rates we are seeing today. Please take my request seriously. An average of 4-6 people will die every month in our shelters, and I do not want to see another preventable death. Please review my letter attached and my previous email/letter (below this email) I sent you one week ago.*

PLEASE, put yourself in the "shoes" of a family member of the next victim, who loses their life in one of your shelters. If you found out the City's lack of training, equipment, adequate number of certified staff, wrong level of training and a policy that denied giving oxygen (the very essence of life for someone experiencing an opioid overdose), and that it HAD directly resulted to the death of your family member (mother, father, sister, brother, son, daughter) - HOW WOULD YOU REACT?

Other personal protective equipment (PPE) such as **surgical /procedure mask, isolation gown, and eye protection (google or face shield) should also be mandatory.** It is also clear that having only 1 staff trained and certified per location, per shift, **is not adequate as per your current requirements.** There should be **at minimum, two (2) staff trained on-site at all times and both trained and**

certified to the Basic Life Support level, NOT your currently recommended level of training which is Standard First Aid CPR (adult, child, baby). This is the WRONG COURSE!

*I also learned that the City of Toronto has released a notice to City staff workers that they **should be providing compression-only CPR and NOT to be providing breaths during COVID-19** (see your poster – step 5 on “How to Prevent and Respond to Overdose”). While I understand the current situation with COVID 19 is challenging, this order is **costing lives**. The use of a BVM and gloves along with the other FULL PPE equipment I list above, provides suitable protection against the virus. **This order may also be discriminatory and a violation of our most vulnerable populations human rights.***

OUTCOME TO SECOND LETTER: NO RESPONSE AGAIN FROM SSHA, SEATON HOUSE, ROBERTSON HOUSE. Ruth Gillson from Toronto Hostels Training did respond saying that they forwarded email to SSHA and they are not able to make any decisions without City present. Bounce back email from Gord Tanner, Director of SSHA. We did not get this notification the first time we emailed Gord the letter, but we did the second time. Although he goes by Gord his email is gordon.tanner@toronto.ca. The delivery of the first email is still in question; however, we can confirm that BOTH emails were successfully delivered to the SSHA’s General Manager, Mary-Anne Bedard as well as Seaton House and Robertson House.

Summary of events AFTER last letter sent on November 2, 2020

1. **MASSIVE COVID-19 OUTBREAKS IN TORONTO SHELTERS - 1,042 COVID-19 cases** linked to outbreaks in shelters as of March 25th, 2021 [according to Toronto Public Health](#).
Note: Seaton House as of March 25th, 2020 has 53 cases.
2. **INCREASE IN SHELTER DEATHS - AFTER OUR LAST LETTER ON NOVEMBER 2, 2020.**
Prior to our communication attempts, the total death count for October 2020 was 3 people in Toronto shelters. This is what happened after our attempts were ignored in the upcoming months:
 - 9 DEATHS IN NOVEMBER 2020 (increase of 3 people from November 2019)
 - 11 DEATHS IN DECEMBER 2020 (increase of 8 people from December 2019)
 - 12 DEATHS IN JANUARY 2021 (an increase of 5 people from January 2020)
 - 6 DEATHS IN FEBRUARY 2021 (no change from February 2020)

COVID-19 INFECTION RATES BY SHELTER AS OF MARCH 25, 2021:

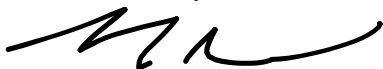
Active COVID-19 Outbreaks in Toronto Shelters

Outbreak Type	Outbreak Number	Location Name	Reported Date	Cases	Deaths	Currently Hospitalized
Shelter	3895-2021-29395	SSHA Seaton House	2021-01-21	53	0	0
	3895-2021-32475	The Salvation Army-Maxwell Meighen Centre	2021-02-03	58	0	0
	3895-2021-32601	Dixon Hall	2021-02-04	40	0	0
	3895-2021-32986	Costi Radisson	2021-02-12	39	0	0
	3895-2021-34013	Fred Victor	2021-02-26	3	0	0
	3895-2021-34289	SSHA Downsview Dells	2021-03-03	13	0	0
	3895-2021-34592	Homes First Society - Willowdale Welcome Centre - Toronto	2021-03-05	70	0	1
	3895-2021-34866	Eva's Place	2021-03-10	4	0	0
	3895-2021-35167	Na-Me-Res	2021-03-12	3	0	0
	3895-2021-35227	SSHA Roehampton Program	2021-03-15	7	0	0
	3895-2021-35234	Homes First Lakeshore Shelter	2021-03-15	8	0	0
	3895-2021-35297	Better Living Centre	2021-03-15	32	0	0
	3895-2021-35425	Dixon Hall - Heyworth House	2021-03-17	7	0	0
	3895-2021-36003	St. Felix Centre Downtown 24- Hour Respite Site	2021-03-23	6	0	0
	Grand Total				343	0

Data extracted from iPHIS and CCM 2021-03-25 2:00:00 PM

We are disheartened that our plea to provide FREE and immediate services were ignored by City officials and Executive Directors at Seaton House and Robertson House. We have still yet to receive a response.

Sincerely,



Nick Rondinelli – CEO / Owner
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 Canadian Red Cross Training Partner & Instructor Trainer
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