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## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

### Dear QCGN Members, Stakeholders and Friends,

We hope all of you are staying safe and healthy as each of us does our part to flatten the curve and stop the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Our lives have been upended and we are doing our best to adjust.

Already this public health emergency has forced a virtual lockdown of our member organizations. Our QCGN office is closed, but our staff is working remotely to continue to provide necessary support to our members, stakeholders and community.

We at the QCGN maintain that our community organizations and institutions, which employ thousands of English-speaking Quebecers, are the cornerstones of our community. The critical need for community and government support for individuals, institutions and organizations – and their employees – cannot be underestimated. They are vital to the fabric of our community and the wider society in which we live and to which we actively contribute. This fundamental belief is guiding us in our discussions with government officials at all levels.

### Wednesday Town Hall

On Wednesday morning at 11, we are holding a town hall discussion to hear the specific needs and priorities of our member and stakeholder organizations. (Please register [here](#). We will forward the link and agenda as soon as they are ready.) This will be an opportunity to describe your experience to date and the challenges you are facing while identifying areas where additional support is required. This conversation will inform QCGN's planning of a number of webinars and other online resources and tools to meet immediate and pressing needs. We are considering organizing sessions with experts on topics ranging from employment law to fundraising and communications.

Because information is key during these times of social distancing and isolation, we are maintaining open lines of communication. We are speaking to members and stakeholders on the telephone and via our social media channels – mainly on Facebook where Quebecers are congregating in these times. We are taking measures to maintain and boost our presence there, and we encourage you to reach out to the QCGN and the community via these channels.

We also continue to produce our routine Daily Briefings which now have a particular focus on everything you need to know about Coronavirus (COVID-19). You can sign up [here](#).

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We are also focussing on securing support from government at all levels, so our members and community partners have the resources needed to continue operating. As a starting point, we are working in concert with other community actors to monitor special government funding programs and are in contact with our federal and provincial partners to ensure continuity and access.

We are pleased to note that the COVID-19 economic benefits announced by the Government of Canada are so far available to non-profit organizations and charities. We are equally happy that governments at all levels have recognized the key role the community sector plays in providing services to Canadians, especially in times of emergency.

We recognize the response of our governments is constantly evolving as they adapt to changing realities. Also, the details of delivering some of the programs that have been announced are in the process of being worked out. QCGN and its community stakeholders are constantly monitoring the situation and we are in contact with our government partners to ensure up-to-date information for community sector organizations serving English-speaking Quebec. We are consolidating that information and will relay it to members and stakeholders during Wednesday's town hall and via other communications channels. Stay tuned.

While our current pre-occupation is the well-being and safety of community members as well as our staff and the people who work for our member organizations, we must also plan for the world after the crisis subsides. They, and other support groups, will be needed more than ever to bring our communities back together to heal and rebuild.

We hope you, your families, and your staff are well and remain well during these difficult times. If you are healthy and mobile, we encourage you to volunteer to deliver food to vulnerable citizens and check up on seniors who are isolated at home.

As always, if you have questions, we are available to you any time

With best wishes,

Stay home and stay healthy,

Geoffrey Chambers, President

Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General

*Thank you for reading our regular newsletter. For up-to-date news about the Quebec Community Groups Network you can visit our website at [www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca) or follow us on Facebook and/or Twitter.*

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