



## REGISTERED MASSAGE THERAPISTS ASSOCIATION OF BC

*Safe, Effective Healthcare*

April 9, 2020

The Honourable John Horgan, Premier  
Government of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Horgan,

The Registered Massage Therapists' Association of British Columbia (RMTBC) is concerned that the Provincial Government's response to the COVID 19 crisis is limited in its ability to address the devastating economic impact of this emergency on Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs) in BC.

There are over 5,000 RMTs in British Columbia, the overwhelming majority of whom are self-employed. The recent containment efforts announced by the Ministry of Health, the Provincial Medical Health Officer and the College of Massage Therapists of BC which the RMTBC supports as an essential step in ensuring public health, are also resulting in extreme financial hardship to our self-employed members, many of whom do not have access to Employment Insurance. Many of our members are ineligible for the initiatives announced by the Federal Government to support practitioners and clinic owners in BC.

The RMTBC urges the government to consider initiatives that will assist RMTs and all self-employed individuals and small business owners in BC in their ability to provide for their families, pay their rent or mortgages and contribute to the tax base.

British Columbia's RMTs play a vital role in providing health services to British Columbians and deliver important services that assist in rehabilitation, improvement in the quality of life for the elderly and alleviate the physical symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety. RMTs help people relieve their musculoskeletal pain in order that they can remain at work longer and continue to enjoy the activities of daily living.

Massage therapy has been recognized as a potential non-drug alternative to opioids in the treatment of chronic pain. While many of these essential services that benefit the health of British Columbians will have to be suspended during this pandemic, any financial support you are able to offer RMTs will ensure that these services can resume as quickly and effectively as possible once the worst of this situation has passed.

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The RMTBC would appreciate receiving information from Government that we can share with our members that will assist in helping them cope financially with this unprecedented crisis. We are also interested in assisting in the Government's efforts in responding to the crisis.

Sincerely,

Gordon MacDonald BSc  
Executive Director

cc: Honourable Carole James, Minister of Finance  
Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Health  
Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development & Competitiveness  
Honourable Harry Bains, Minister of Labour  
Honourable Judy Darcy, Minister of Mental Health & Addictions  
Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing