



# ACDS COVID-19 Advocacy Activities

## MARCH to DECEMBER 2020

Since the COVID-19 public health emergency was declared in mid-March 2020, ACDS has intensified supports to the Community Disability Service (CDS) sector. Through the Service Provider Partnership Committee (SPPC) and with regular communication with service providers and Alberta Community and Social Services (CSS), ACDS has kept abreast of emerging issues and been a central player influencing the collaborative development of policy responses.

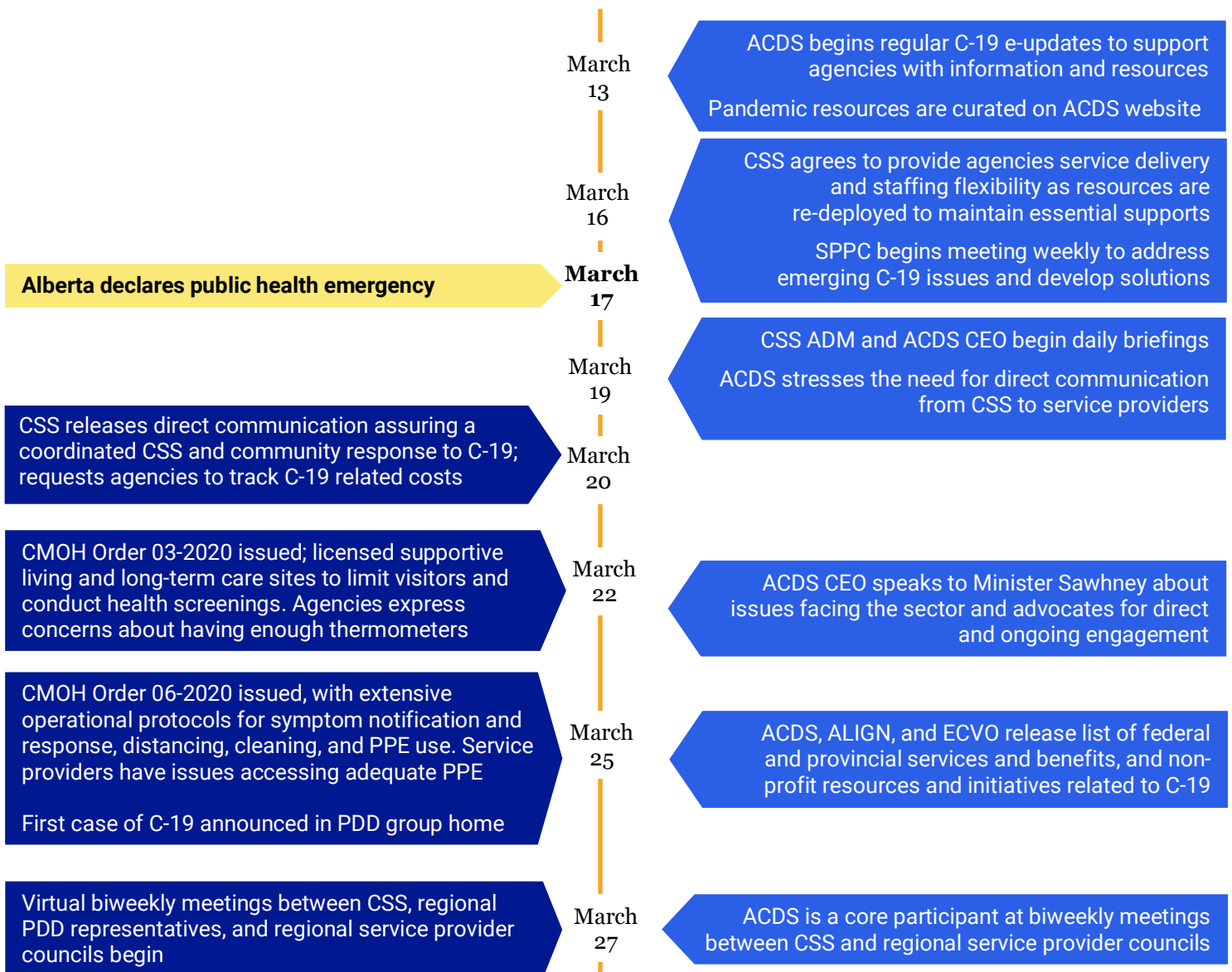
### MARCH 2020

Provincial public health emergency issued. Public health orders guide operations at care sites.

**ACDS advocates CSS to enhance direct communication with service providers, allow service delivery and staffing flexibility, recognise COVID costs, and support agencies to interpret health guidelines and access PPE.**

#### Events and Developments

#### ACDS Activities and Responses



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## APRIL 2020

Health orders restrict staff movement across care facilities, and there is confusion in how these apply to community disability residences; staffing challenges and access to PPE are exacerbated.

**ACDS advocates for CSS to coordinate access to PPE, provide written communication to help clarify health orders, and raises concerns about staffing challenges. Through SPPC, ACDS supports CSS to develop revised C-19 invoicing for greater contract flexibility.**

### Events and Developments

### ACDS Activities and Responses



# **COVID-19 Advocacy Activities**

**MAY 2020**

Phase 1 of Alberta's reopening begins May 14. Health orders gradually and cautiously relax restrictions.

**ACDS advocates for clear guidance from CSS for the reopening of community access programs and prepares a tool to assist service providers develop their reopening plans. ACDS also provides workforce information to the Minister and a statement advocating for wage top-up. A one-pager on workforce data is also released to support sector advocacy.**

## Events and Developments

## ACDS Activities and Responses



# **COVID-19 Advocacy Activities**

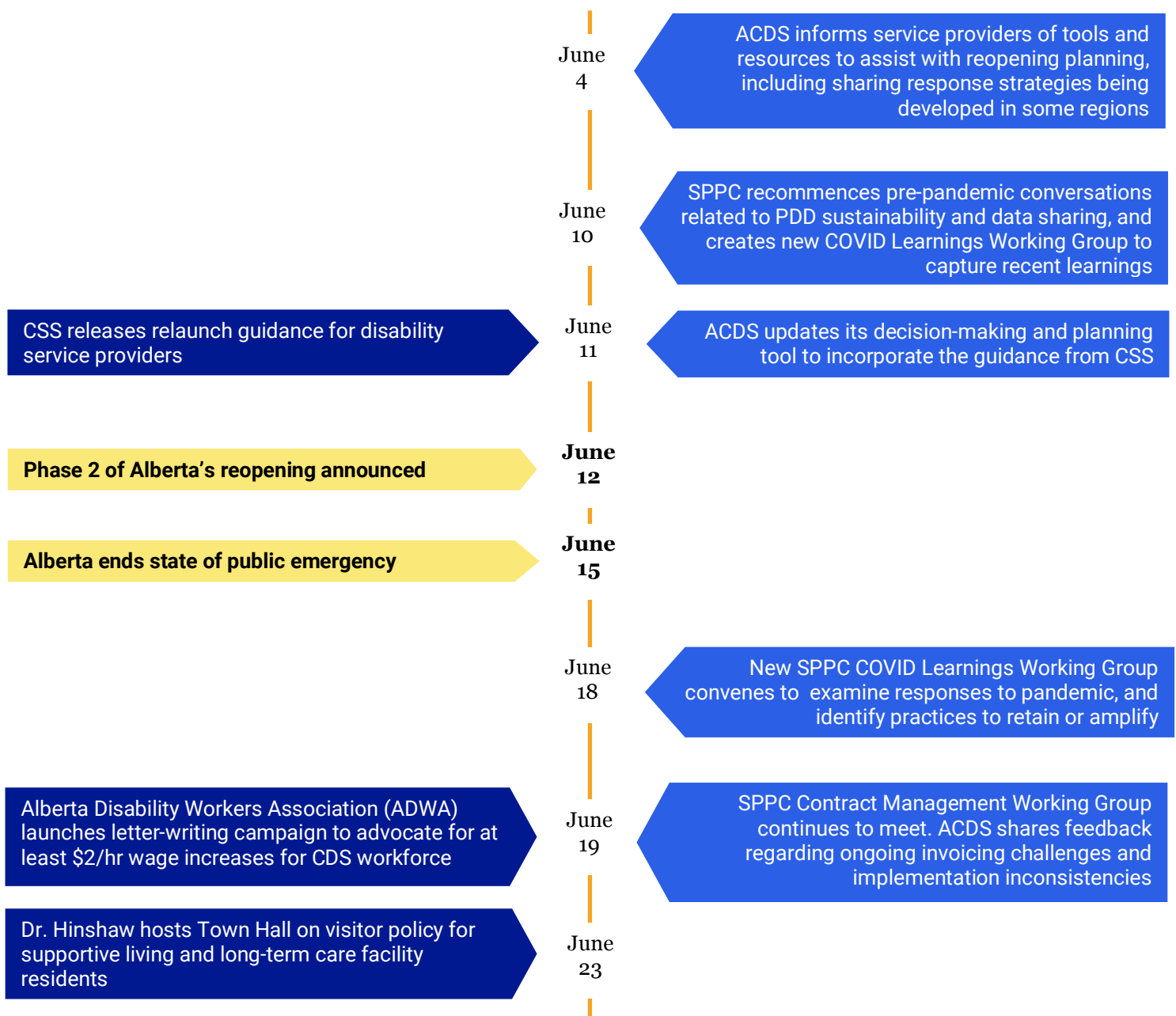
## **JUNE 2020**

Phase 2 of Alberta's reopening begins June 12; public health emergency is lifted June 15. Health guidelines increasing some allowances while restricting other create confusion and conflicting pressures. Reopening of non-essential services creates new staffing deployment issues.

**ACDS advocates for CSS to engage with Health to make appropriate adjustments and exemptions to mandatory regulations to reflect differences in risks between sites, and to provide services with information and tools to make reasoned risk assessments in their reopening approach. Invoicing process is clarified and SPPC launches COVID Learnings Working Group to assess responses and identify key learnings from the pandemic.**

### **Events and Developments**

### **ACDS Activities and Responses**



# **COVID-19 Advocacy Activities**

**JULY 2020**

Visitation restrictions relax in long-term care facilities and school re-entry plan is announced.

**ACDS supports CDS sector relaunch, SPPC resumes discussions on systemic issues, and ACDS submits formal response to Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society.**

## Events and Developments

## ACDS Activities and Responses



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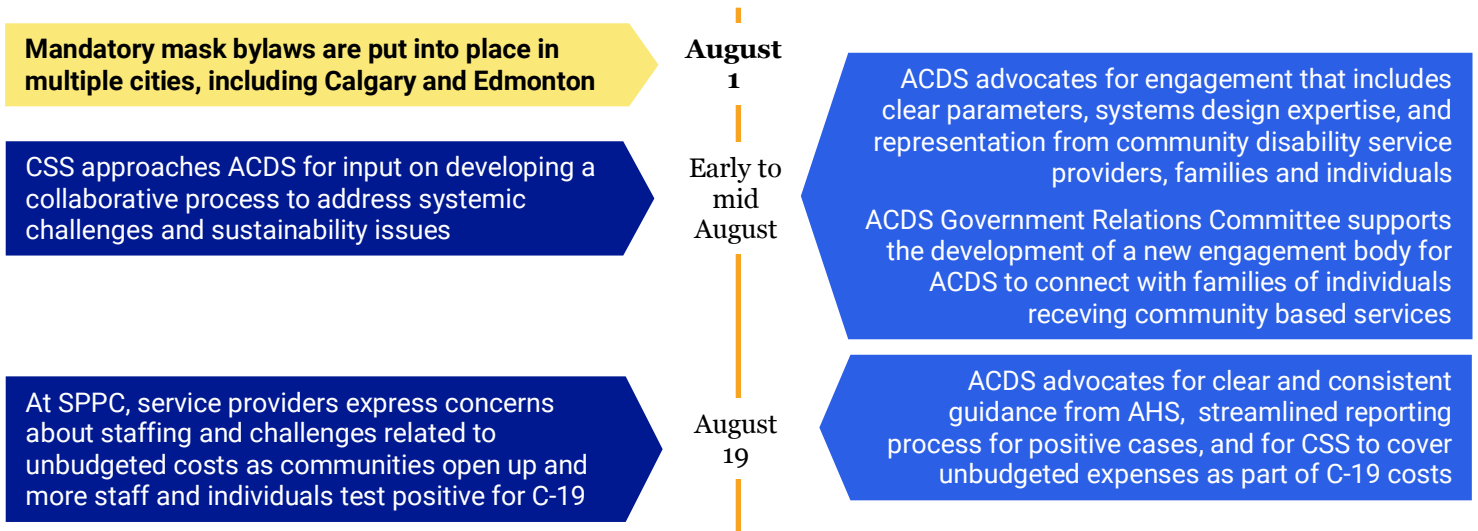
## AUGUST 2020

Masking bylaws are implemented in various communities across the province. Increasing numbers of staff and individuals begin testing positive for C-19. Staff coverage costs start exceeding budgeted amounts; some staff express reluctance to work in homes where positive C-19 cases are reported.

**ACDS advocates for clear guidance from AHS, and for CSS to allow unbudgeted coverage costs to be claimed under C-19 expenses. CSS invites input from ACDS on developing a collaborative process to address sustainability challenges through system transformation.**

### Events and Developments

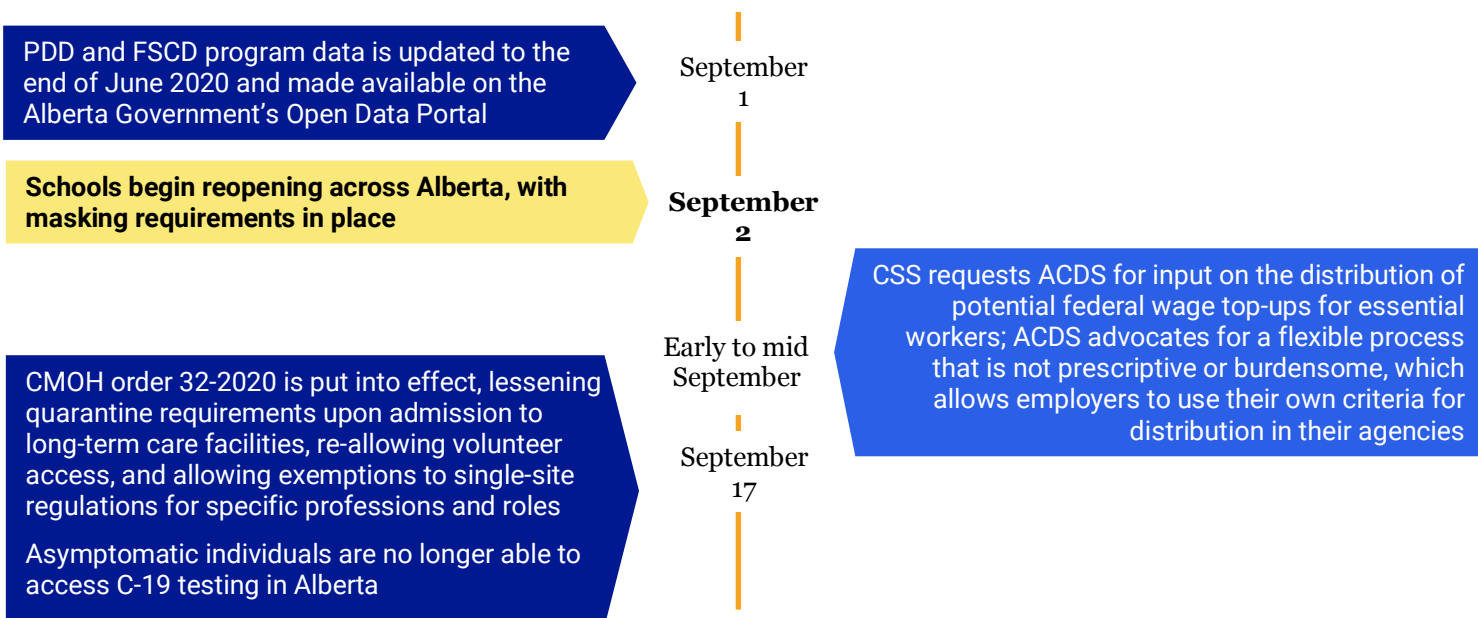
### ACDS Activities and Responses



## September 2020

Schools reopen in Alberta, a broader range of PDD data becomes publicly available, some public health restrictions are relaxed for care facilities, and new federal programs are announced.

**ACDS supports the sector with information on federal programs, and provides input to CSS on distribution of federal wage top-ups if these were to become available to workers in the CDS sector.**



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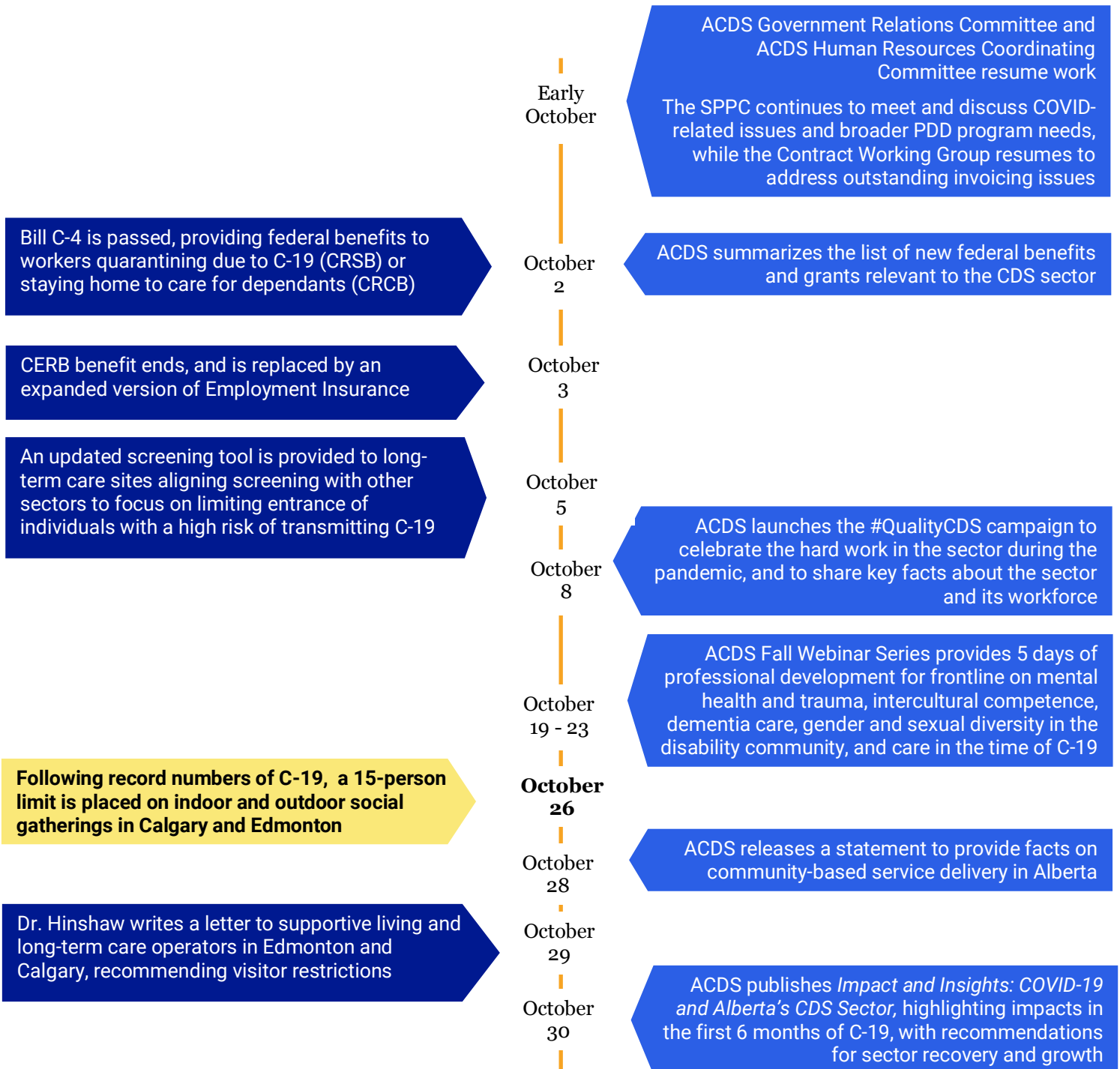
October 2020

As federal CERB comes to an end, workers are transitioned to an expanded version of Employment Insurance and a new sickness and caregiving benefit (CRSB and CRCB). C-19 cases begin to rise in mid-October, resulting in a 15-person limit on social gatherings in Calgary and Edmonton.

**ACDS resumes committees that had been paused due to C-19, and launches the #QualityCDS campaign to celebrate and share facts about the CDS sector. A report detailing impacts and learnings from the first 6 months of C-19 is produced to help inform improvements to PDD program sustainability and supports.**

## Events and Developments

## ACDS Activities and Responses



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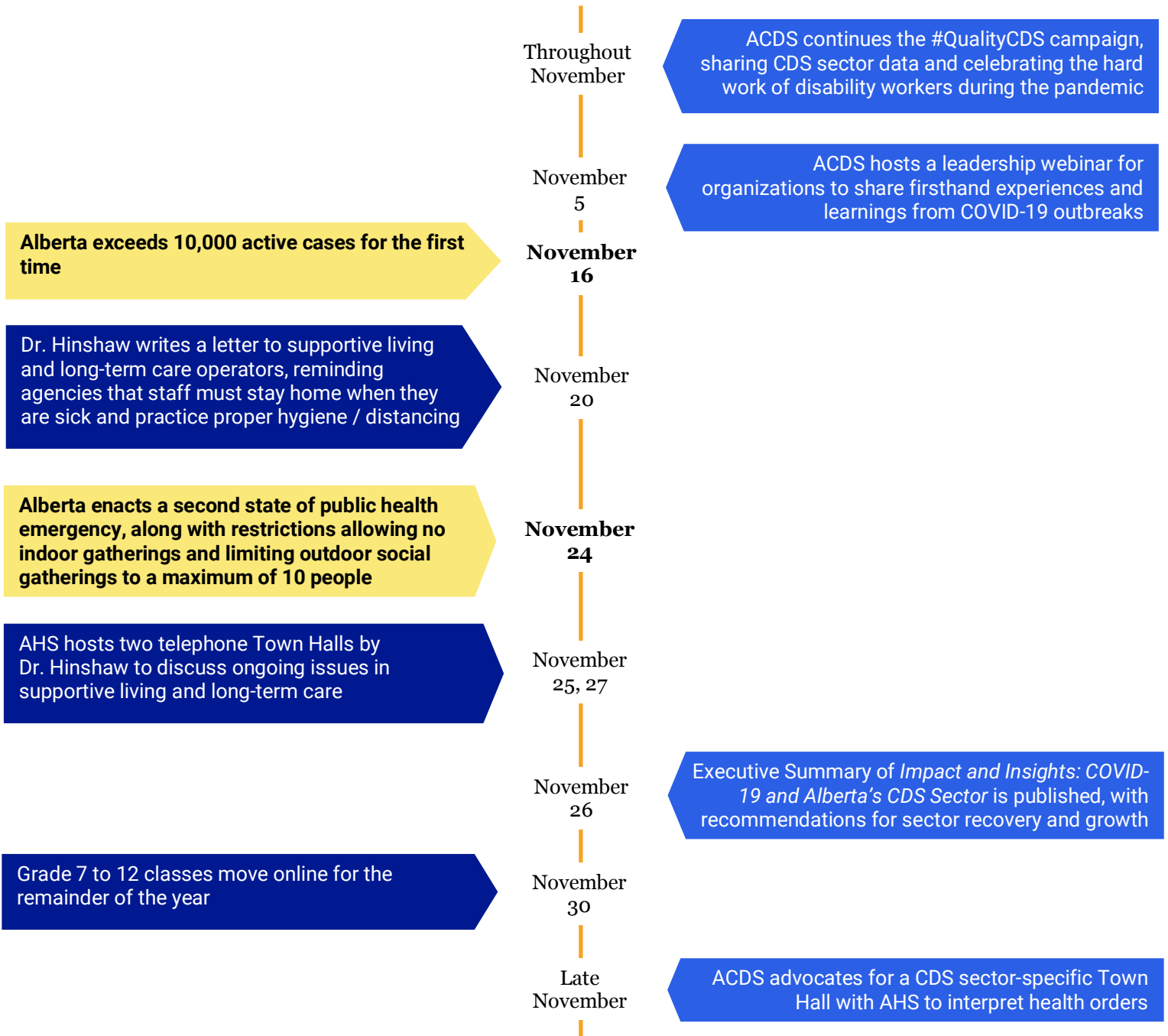
## November 2020

C-19 cases continue to rise throughout Alberta and a second state of public health emergency is announced. New restrictions include no indoor gatherings, a maximum of 10 people at outdoor social gatherings, and grade 7 to 12 classes move online for the remainder of the year.

**ACDS continues to circulate information on Alberta's CDS sector as a part of the #QualityCDS campaign, and advocates for a forum by AHS to address CDS-specific questions related to the public health orders.**

### Events and Developments

### ACDS Activities and Responses





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December 2020

Recognition pay begins to rollout to disability service providers. As C-19 case counts continue to rise, new restrictions are enacted, prohibiting all indoor and outdoor social gatherings. C-19 vaccinations begin in Alberta.

**ACDS assists AHS to host two sector-specific Town Halls, and presents a webinar with an expert panel discussing approaches to complex challenges. Preliminary results of ACDS' 2020 Workforce Survey are released, and ACDS is invited by CSS Minister Sawhney to a sector-specific round table discussion on challenges and opportunities.**

## Events and Developments

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