

## **STEP Canada 2020/Coronavirus Update – March 20, 2020**

The health, safety and wellbeing of our volunteers, members, event delegates, sponsors, employees and their families is of utmost concern to STEP Canada.

STEP Canada has been closely monitoring and will continue to monitor COVID-19 announcements and updates from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The PHAC is a reliable source of information, as are provincial and territorial public health authorities.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html>

STEP Canada will take its guidance from the PHAC and other key agencies regarding STEP Canada events and gatherings taking place over the coming weeks, including the national conference. There is an increased risk of more severe outcomes for Canadians:

- aged 65 and over
- with compromised immune systems
- with underlying medical conditions

### **22<sup>nd</sup> National Conference**

STEP Canada is sensitive to how current events may be causing stress and anxiety to our conference supporters, we would like to do what we can to alleviate this.

We have updated our cancellation policy. Any delegates or sponsors who wish to withdraw from the conference will receive a full refund, no administration fee will be held back.

The executive committee and senior staff are actively reviewing logistical issues with venues and suppliers, and giving careful consideration to the changing financial impacts to STEP Canada as government agencies and organizations respond to the COVID-19 threat.

If it is decided to move forward with the planned conference on June 11-12 it will be a good sign that these difficult days are behind us. However, if the unfortunate decision is made to cancel the conference rest assured, all remaining delegates and sponsors will receive a full refund.

To our ever-important and valued sponsors, please know you will all retain your first right of refusal for the 2021 conference, regardless of the outcome of our 2020 event. 2021 dates are May 27-28.

### **Cancellation of STEP Canada Branch and Chapter Events March 18 through June 2020**

STEP Canada's executive committee has determined it is in the best interest of STEP Canada to cancel all STEP branch and chapter events from now until the end of June 2020. This decision was not taken lightly and is supported by the board of directors. Refunds for registration fees paid are in process.

### **Ongoing Assessment**

We will continue to monitor the situation, which is rapidly evolving, and assess our plans accordingly. We will provide regular updates to our stakeholders. Once again, the health, safety and wellbeing of our volunteers, members, event delegates, sponsors, employees and their families is and will remain our top priority.

We are very hopeful you all remain well and that we can look forward to seeing you at future events.

**STEP Canada**