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July Issue

BC Heat Wave, World Brain Day and Canada's Social Programs

By **Jessica Jung** on July 27, 2021

Welcome to the July issue of our MEDIC newsletter! This month we will be discussing topics of the BC Heat Wave, Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and Canada's Social Programs. This summer 2021 had record breaking temperatures in BC, with Lytton reaching up to 49.6C. Additionally, July 22 was World Brain Day, which aims to raise awareness about MS. Raising awareness about MS can help diagnose earlier, provide better access to life-changing treatments and advocate for improved quality of life for patients and caregivers. For more information on World Brain Day, visit <https://wfneurology.org/world-brain-day-2021>. Lastly, in this month's issue of the MEDIC newsletter, we will be discussing how the Coronavirus crisis has exposed difficulties in Canada's social programs as MPS and activists push for more resources and support from the government.

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THIS MONTH'S
TOP STORIES

BC's heat wave caused significant number of deaths

Summary by **Jessica Jung** on July 28, 2021



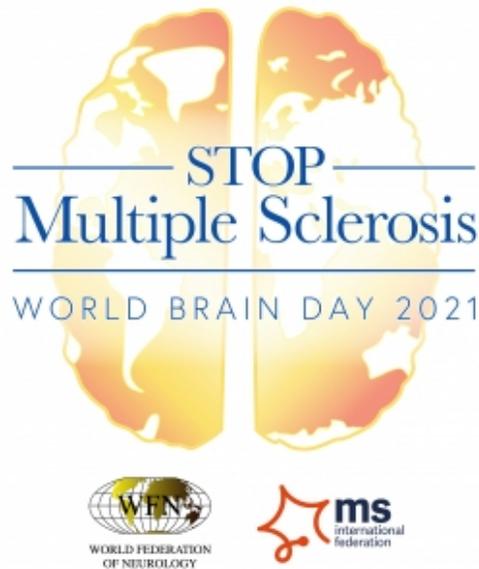
Source: CTV News

On Tuesday June 29, the Village of Lytton broke heat records, and experienced 49.6C heat. There were 808 recorded deaths due to the heat wave across BC from June 25 through July 1 according to coroners. This is significant compared to the average over the previous five years, at 198 deaths through the same period due to heat. Many of these deaths involved seniors who lived alone in poorly ventilated homes. Due to the rise in numbers, the government's response to heat has been criticized. People are frustrated with the lack of resources and preparation provided by the government, although BC Premier John has stated this weather event to be 'unprecedented'. In an attempt to address the frustrations, the province promised to study the heat wave and response with the goal to avoid this crisis next year. An international group of climate scientists, the World Weather Attribution, determined the heat wave to be similar 'rare or extremely rare' and stated these will become more likely as global temperatures rise.

As another heat warning is in effect, it is important to check on those most vulnerable to heat related illness and death. For more information on protecting BC's seniors during heatwaves, watch this Global News Interview with BC's Seniors Advocate, Isobel Mackenzie. (<https://globalnews.ca/video/rd/0b02b538-efb9-11eb-a6af-0242ac110007/?jwsourc=cl>)

World Brain Day

Summary by **Michelle Chen** on July 18, 2021



Source: World Federation of Neurology

Over 2.8 million people are affected by multiple sclerosis (MS), a neurological disease with a range of symptoms from physical disability to cognitive impairment. An estimated new case is diagnosed every 5 mins, and people of all ages can be affected by MS. There are treatments that can slow down the progression of MS and improve quality of life, but unfortunately medication is not accessible to everyone in the world. Effective treatment also requires early detection so education to recognise signs and symptoms of MS is important, as well as advocating for better access to treatments. The Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF) invites MS patients and caregivers who would like to share their stories with MS to email a video message (max. 90 seconds) to wbd2021@wfneurology.org.

How The Coronavirus Crisis Exposed Difficulties in Canada's Social Programs

Summary by **Nicholas Feng** on June 28, 2021



Source: Huffingtonpost

Recently Trudeau's government has enacted numerous emergency measures with relation to provincial and municipalities' actions. As Canada subsidizes wages for more than 284,000 businesses, provide financial assistance for more than eight million Canadians, as well as create the Canada Child Benefit, the question remains how will the government be able to recover from such a financial deficit of emergency response that will likely increase the overall deficit to \$250 billion in 2020 - a more than 10-fold increase from 2019.

The last time such drastic measures were created was during the Second World War, and its end as the unprecedented number of returning soldiers with no employment opportunities and medical concerns desperately needed a massive government response to the overwhelming crisis. Can Canada emerge better than before and provide the necessary support to its citizens following the COVID-19 crisis?

As University of Toronto Prof. Dimitry Anastakis, who specializes in Canadian business history states, "at some point the government is going to have to raise taxes."

Finance Minister Bill Morneau's response being, "the most important thing we can do is preserve and enhance our position afterward."

As the COVID-19 crisis gradually winds down, and as the government works towards distribution of vaccines and treatments, it is time to focus on developing a structured system that can recover the Canadian economy and bring about stability. As persistent inequalities are brought to the attention of Canadian citizens such as, essential workers who restock grocery store shelves, clean hospitals, or attend to the sick are paid below a living wage, or the Canadians who are homeless, incarcerated, or a visible minority impacted by the health and economic impacts of the disease. What social investment and development are necessary to prevent a COVID-19 crisis and its social impacts from happening in the future?

As some MPS and activists push for universal pharmacare, paid sick leave, and more investment in public health, hospitals, and medical equipment, it is time for Canada to focus on redeveloping its social programs and policies.

MEDIC's New and Improved Website

If you missed it last month... don't forget to check out our new website at medicfoundation.org! Let us know what you think, and if there's anything you'd like to see added to our website! Do you have something you think would be worth featuring or spotlighting next month? Notice any issues viewing or accessing our website? We appreciate all feedback, so don't hesitate to contact us!

Thank you for subscribing to our newsletter and supporting our initiative! Don't forget to tune into next month's issue!

[CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE](#)

References

<https://bc.ctvnews.ca/number-of-deaths-recorded-during-b-c-s-heat-wave-up-to-808-coroners-say-1.5512723>

<https://wfneurology.org/world-brain-day-2021>



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