



COVID-19 DIGEST

MEDICAL STAFF

Thursday, June 11, 2020

Medical staff updates will be sent out Tuesday and Thursday. For the latest news and resources on COVID-19, visit the [Coronavirus page on OurNH](#) or on the [physician website](#). Printable PDFs of these updates are on the physician website.

Provincial case counts and statements

As of June 10, 2020, there were **66** confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Northern Health region. Although only one case is considered active, it is important that we remain vigilant in our communities.

For the latest provincial numbers, please refer to the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated each afternoon. The dashboard may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested.

[Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – June 10, 2020

Q & A: Testing asymptomatic individuals for COVID-19

We are receiving a lot of questions from staff regarding the testing of asymptomatic individuals. In nearly all cases, there is no need to test asymptomatic individuals.

In this document, “asymptomatic” refers to people who have not had symptoms of COVID-19. This guidance does not apply to people whose symptoms have recently resolved following a confirmed or probable COVID-19 infection.

Q: When should asymptomatic individuals be tested for COVID-19?

A: Almost never. The vast majority of results in asymptomatic people are negative. Negative results are not informative. Positive results will be very rare and potentially misleading.

For more information, see the [full Q&A document](#).

New policy and procedure on gown usage

- A policy and a process related to the use of procedure gowns (i.e., isolation gowns, chemo gowns, and cover gowns) has been developed.

- NH is implementing reusable gowns in certain high-volume areas where there is capacity to launder them appropriately. All disposable and reusable gowns must be procured through Supply Chain.
- Disposable and reusable gowns in NH meet Canadian Standards for required barrier protection.

For more information and links to the policy and process, see the [full memo](#).

NH Labs are accepting Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) samples again

- NH labs have resumed accepting FIT requisitions and FIT samples.
 - Health care providers can resume ordering FIT tests on average-risk patients, as done previously.
 - Colon-screening guidelines remain the same.
- Patients with a current laboratory requisition (not older than 12 months) and an in-date FIT kit can proceed with sample collection and present to their local laboratory to drop off the sample.
- Patients with a current laboratory requisition and without a kit or with an expired kit must contact their local laboratory and arrange to pick up a FIT Kit.
- Patients with an expired laboratory requisition (older than 12 months) must contact their health care provider to request a new requisition.

For more information, see the [full memo](#).

Outpatient Hepatitis C testing to resume

- Effective immediately, Northern Health Laboratories are resuming the collection of outpatient Hepatitis C samples.
- Patient with a current laboratory requisition (not older than 12 months) are invited to contact their local laboratory to arrange to have their sample collected.
- Patient with an expired laboratory requisition (older than 12 months) must contact their health care provider to request a new requisition.

For more information, see the [full memo](#).

Updated clinical response guidelines

- Three Clinical Response Guidelines for outpatient, community, and in-home service settings have been updated.
- Updates reflect BCCDC changes to COVID-19 symptoms and additional simplification and alignment of information.
- The updated guidelines are:
 - [Clinical Response Guidelines for COVID-19 for Outpatient Settings](#)
 - [Clinical Response Guidelines for COVID-19 for in-home visits and in-home care provision](#)
 - [Clinical Response Guidelines for COVID-19 for Community Based Services](#)

Case and Contact Management Update and new name for Public Health Outbreak Management Structure

- Updated information about [COVID-19 case and contact management](#) functions and the structure responsible for these functions is available.
- The structure responsible for case and contact management has been renamed Urgent Communicable Disease Response (UCDR).
- Communication pathways for more information are identified.

For more information, see the [full memo](#).

Essential Population and Public Health, and Preventive Services within Primary and Community Care during COVID-19 Response

- Population and Public Health (PPH) has identified essential public health services for primary care interprofessional teams (IPTs) to maintain during the COVID-19 pandemic response, as outlined in a briefing note approved by NH EOC on March 26.
- To support local operational decision makers to determine how to continue with these services, PPH has developed a resource tool entitled [Essential Population and Public Health and Preventive Services within Primary and Community Care during COVID-19 response](#).
- This resource includes the collation of regionally and provincially developed guidance documents.

For more information, see the [full memo](#).

Update: Transition from Synapse to PowerChart – mental health acute care

Mental health acute care is transitioning to PowerChart to support patient care. Synapse for documentation will be discontinued as part of this transition. All existing Synapse accounts will be inactivated when the community goes live on PowerChart.

All Northern Health mental health services began transitioning in a phased approach on a community-by-community basis. Acute care implementation was delayed due to COVID-19. The updated schedule is as follows:

- **Complete - Tertiary:** Iris House, Urqhaurt House, Davis Drive, Legion Wing
- **Complete - Youth & Adult Detox:** AWMU, Youth Treatment
- **UPDATED: June 15, 2020 - Acute:** 3NE, APAU, PLN

Physicians in self-isolation

If you're a physician in self-isolation, email Susan Trenholm: Susan.Trenholm@northernhealth.ca

Resources for stress and emotional support

Support Lines

- **Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP)**
 - **1-844-751-2133** – 24/7 crisis counselling support and/or referral to community resources.
- **Physician Health Program** – supports available through Doctors of BC
 - Refer to information online at: [Doctors of BC: Physician Health Program](#)
- **BC Crisis Line**
 - Call **310-6789** for access to 24/7 crisis services.
- **VictimLink BC**
 - If you or someone you know is experiencing violence, immediate crisis support for victims of family or sexual violence is available through [VictimLink BC's](#) 24/7 telephone service in multiple languages at [1-800-563-0808](tel:1-800-563-0808), or by email at VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca, to be referred to the closest service agency.

Trusted links and resources

- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control “new today” page](#)
- [HealthLink BC COVID-19 page](#)
- [WHO FAQ](#)
- [Health Canada FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 content in other languages](#)
- WorkSafe BC - [COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- [BC Physician Wellness in COVID-19](#) (BC COVID-19 Medical Student Response Team)
- Northern Health COVID-19 Online Clinic & Information Line: **1-844-645-7811**
- Northern Health Environmental Health Officer Line: **1-250-565-7322**
- For **non-medical information or to report concerns regarding non-compliance with public health orders**, call **1-888-COVID19 / 1-888-268-4319** 7 days, 7:30 am - 8 pm

For current information on restrictions on travel, gatherings and other issues, see the [Provincial Health Officer's webpage on current health topics](#).

24/7 Physician Call Centre

- Number: 250-645-7897
- Local: 507897
- Toll Free: 1-833-645-7897

Rural Outreach Support group (ROSe) for COVID-19

24/7 additional information, support, or guidance

- Toll Free: 1-888-918-0626