



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A twice-weekly update for medical staff*

**Tuesday, July 7, 2020**

Medical Staff Digests are sent out every Tuesday and Thursday.

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## COVID-19

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### NH's COVID-19 resources

For more COVID-19 information, see these OurNH pages:

- [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#)
- [Pandemic Recovery Toolkit](#)
- [Physician website](#)

### Provincial case counts and statements

**As of July 6, 2020**, there were **65** confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Northern Health region. Although no cases are 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 Monday-Friday. The dashboard may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested.

[Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – July 6, 2020

### Overwrapping and Sealing of Blood Products

Transfusion Medicine Services (TMS) throughout Northern Health have taken a NAC-recommended, proactive approach by enhancing the dispensation procedure with overwrapping and sealing of blood products to prevent the potential spread of infection.

NAC recommends the following:

- Take only one unit of blood component or one vial of plasma protein product at a time into a patient's room and only prior to transfusion administration.
- Place all blood products, used or unused, in a clean biohazard bag prior to return to the TMS department.
- Communicate clearly to lab staff if the blood product was exposed to a patient with an infectious disease.

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

### COVID-19 In-House Testing Update

Northern Health lab services can now expand in-house testing to include samples from Health Care workers (HCW1 and 2). The updated patient's group list is as follows:

- **HOSP** – Hospitalized
- **LTC** – Resident of a long-term care facility
- **OBK** – Outbreaks, clusters, or case contacts
- **HCW1** – Health care worker (direct patient care)
- **HCW2** – Health care worker (indirect patient care)
- **FN-CMM** – First Nation Specific Locations due to remoteness
- **CGT** – Congregate settings

Other urgent requests for testing can be discussed with a pathologist on a case-by-case basis

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

### Phase 3 of BC's Restart Plan includes a gradual return to smart, safe and respectful travel

Before traveling *within* B.C. this summer, public health officials recommend checking to make sure towns, communities and regions are ready to welcome visitors. Those who are travelling *to* B.C. from another province or territory within Canada are expected to follow the same travel guidelines as everyone else in B.C. and travel safely and respectfully.

All travellers arriving in B.C. from *outside of Canada*, unless they are exempt, are required by provincial law to [self-isolate](#) for 14 days and complete a self-isolation plan. The federal government has also mandated that any traveler returning to Canada must [quarantine](#) (self-isolate) for 14 days. And travel *to* Canada by non-residents - including U.S. citizens - for non-essential reasons such as for tourism, recreation or entertainment, is currently prohibited.

**It is important to remember that there may be a legitimate reason for the presence of a US resident, US-plated vehicle, or out-of-province-plated vehicles in our region.** Concerns about violations of current restrictions on non-essential travel, or failure to abide by mandatory 14-day quarantine or isolation upon entry to Canada, should be brought to the attention of RCMP, and/or the Public Health Agency of Canada.

### **Long-term care/assisted living digest – issue 3**

The long-term care task group will be developing updates bi-weekly for residents and families of long-term care homes and assisted living facilities.

[This issue of the update](#) provides them with information about the changes to visiting restrictions and the guidelines which are in place in case of a COVID-19 outbreak in a facility.

### **Trusted links and resources for COVID-19**

- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [HealthLink BC COVID-19 page](#)
- [WHO FAQ](#)
- [Health Canada FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 content in other languages](#)
- WorkSafe BC - [COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- 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 info**, 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 COVID-19 webpage](#).

## **Overdose prevention and response**

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### **Data release - COVID-19 pandemic sparks surge in overdose deaths this year**

The toll of the illicit drug toxicity crisis on BC First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals is rising again this year, erasing previous gains, according to data released today by the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA).

Suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths spiked between January and May this year. During this period, 89 First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals lost their lives. This is a 93 per cent increase in deaths compared to the same period last year.

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

## Other organizational news

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### Microsoft Teams: Setting up Microsoft multi-factor authentication in advance recommended for remote workers

On July 22 (note: new go-live date), Microsoft Teams will replace Skype for Business for meetings, calls, instant messaging, presence indicators, and more.

As part of the transition, you might need to do a one-time setup of Microsoft multi-factor authentication (MFA). **Don't leave it until right before your first Microsoft Teams meeting!**

"Multi-factor authentication" means logging in with an extra security question or passcode. This helps keep your information safe.

Do I need to set up MFA?

- If you'll always use Microsoft Teams from a computer inside an NH facility, you **don't** need to set up MFA
- If you work remotely (telework) using VPN on an NH laptop, **you need to set up MFA, otherwise you won't be able to use Microsoft Teams** – which means no meetings, messaging, etc.
- The same applies if you plan to use Microsoft Teams on a personal or NH smartphone, tablet, laptop or other device you'll use outside an NH facility: **you need to set up MFA, or you won't be able to use Microsoft Teams.**

For step-by-step instructions with screenshots, see [Setting up Microsoft Multi-Factor Authentication](#) (OurNH link).

### Webinar on Microsoft Teams this Friday

To learn more about Microsoft Teams, join this free webinar:

- Friday, July 10
- 10:00 – 11:30 PDT
- Click to join: <https://aka.ms/NHATeamsTrainingJuly10>

Microsoft trainers will be the hosts. Ask your questions in the chat – they'll be answered in real time!

Additional webinars are being arranged for July 16, 23, 30, and August 6 – watch for announcements.

## Staff recognition (RAARs)

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### Random Acts of Acknowledgment and Recognition (RAARs)

We know that as medical staff at Northern Health, you often go above and beyond, and so do your colleagues. RAARs are a way for you recognize each other and say "thank you."

- See the [latest RAARs](#)

- [RAAR someone today!](#)

## Staff wellness

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### 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.
- [Emergencies and Disasters: Staff Self-Care Policy](#)
- **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](mailto:VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca), to be referred to the closest service agency.

## Community Corner and Staff Deals

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### NH Community Corner: Buy, sell, and trade for NH staff members

Looking for a good used vehicle? Trying to sell your house? Community Corner is a private online swap-and-shop for NH staff members and medical staff. Categories include Housing to Rent, Housing for Sale, Pets and Livestock, Furniture and Appliances, Wanted, and much more.

- [Visit Community Corner](#)
- [Post your classified ad now](#)

### Staff Deals: Get a special rate!

Did you know? Because you work at Northern Health, you can get discounts at a number of businesses, including hotels, food and dining, computers, clothing, insurance, and more. See the full list here: [Staff Deals](#).