



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A twice-weekly update for medical staff

Thursday, September 10, 2020

Medical Staff Digests are sent out every Tuesday and Thursday.

Sections

COVID-19.....	1
Overdose prevention and response	4
Other organizational news.....	4

COVID-19

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 September 9, 2020, there were **193** confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Northern Health region. A total of **23** cases in the North are considered active. As always, 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. Surveillance reports for COVID-19, which includes breakdown of cases by Health Service Delivery Area, are [posted every Thursday on the BCCDC website](#).

- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – September 9, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – September 3, 2020

COVID-19 antibody testing guidelines now available

Guidelines for SARS-CoV-2 antibody testing developed for BC can be found on the [antibody testing \(serology\) page of the BCCDC website](#). An accompanying FAQ document has also been developed, and can be found [here](#).

Serology tests can help determine previous SARS-CoV-2 infection, but since it can take time for antibodies to be reliably detected, this testing is limited to specific circumstances. In BC, COVID-19 is diagnosed using [viral testing \(nucleic acid testing, or NAT\)](#).

At this time, COVID-19 antibody testing is not available in BC for routine clinical use nor is it recommended for clinical diagnostic purposes in most situations.

- Use of antibody testing is currently only recommended for:
 - a limited number of clinical scenarios, *or*
 - at the direction of Medical Health Officers as part of public health investigations, *or*
 - epidemiologic and research studies
- Requests for serological testing for clinical purposes **require prior approval by the pathologist in your health services delivery area and a clinical or medical microbiologist.**

Visitation in long-term care homes, assisted living facilities, and acute care

We appreciate and understand that family physicians are placed in a difficult situation in meeting the resident/patient/family's expectations regarding visitation with their loved ones who are in our facilities. Visitation has become an emotional and stressful topic for some as a result of the length of time that some family members have not been able to visit face-to-face.

Below are the current visiting guidelines in place for our facilities:

Long-term care and assisted living:

- LTCH/AL residents are able to visit with **one designated** family member or friend. This does **not** mean one family member or friend at a time. It means the designated person is the **only** person who's allowed to visit.
- [Essential visits](#) are allowed as required.

Acute care (including ALC patients):

- At this time, visitation for patients designated as alternate level of care (ALC) in acute care is still limited to [essential visits](#) only.
- All acute care visits are limited to [essential visits](#) only.

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

BC Government investment to bring new COVID-19 support

The Province is investing \$1.6 billion in a fall and winter preparedness plan that will significantly build upon and strengthen measures that respond to the health care requirements of COVID-19.

The Government of B.C. is also dedicating \$44.1 million to launch the Health Career Access Program to recruit an estimated 7,000 health care workers for long-term care homes and assisted-living facilities throughout the province.

For further information, see the [full press release](#).

Take the Northern Pediatric Wellness Survey

The University of British Columbia and the Northern Pediatric Wellness (NPW) team are seeking feedback on how COVID-19 and physical distancing measures have impacted child wellness in the Northern Health region. Take the [short survey](#) to help out.

Additional information:

- [NPW Survey invitation letter](#)
- [NPW Survey poster](#)

Amended provincial health order: Bars, nightclubs, and banquet halls

Despite efforts by public health teams, bars, nightclubs, and banquet halls remain a significant point of risk for spread of COVID-19. Because of this, [the provincial health officer's order has been amended](#).

As of September 8, all nightclubs, and stand-alone banquet halls have been ordered closed until further notice. Liquor sales in bars, pubs, and restaurants must stop at 10 pm and the venue must close by 11 pm, unless they are providing full meal service.

If a venue is providing full meal service, it may remain open, but may not serve liquor until 11 am the following day. Additionally, music and other background noise, such as televisions, must be no louder than the volume of a normal conversation.

See the Government of BC's website for a [full list of provincial health officer orders](#).

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

Anti-stigma resource: Compassionate Engagement Modules Part 1

The [Compassionate Engagement Modules](#) are a series of interactive case studies about stigma and discrimination experienced by People Who Use Drugs (PWUD). These modules are designed to engage PWUD and the people who provide services to them (health care providers, frontline service providers, managers, and leadership).

The Compassionate Engagement Modules provide an opportunity for PWUD and providers to learn from each other's perspectives, develop solutions, and practice compassionate care, effective communication, and self-advocacy.

To access the Compassionate Engagement Modules, visit [Toward the Heart](#).

Other organizational news

News from Across NH

Check your own health information online! Sign up for our HealtheLife patient portal – you could win an iPad!

HealtheLife is an online service that lets you see your own results for microbiology, radiology, pathology, and lab. You can also check your own hospital-based appointments. HealtheLife is open now for NH Staff and medical staff as a free trial.

If you take part in the trial, you could win one of three iPads – draws will take place in September and October! To sign up for the trial, [send us an email](#) with the last 4 digits of your Personal Health Number in the body.

Everyone who has signed up for the HealtheLife trial since the launch on August 21 will automatically be entered in the draw. All you have to do to enter the draw is to sign up for the trial. [See full contest details](#).

(Note: The trial is for NH staff and medical staff only for now – no family members or friends yet).

Your feedback is important – tell us how we can improve! You have 2 feedback options and we encourage you to use both:

1. Email patient.activation@northernhealth.ca with the great, good, bad, or ugly. We want it all!

2. Complete the short survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/HealthLifeSurvey>

For more information visit [HealthLife on OurNH](#).

Celebrate Health Care Simulation Week – September 14 - 20, 2020

Join Northern Clinical Simulation as we celebrate [Health Care Simulation Week](#) September 14 - 20! This week recognizes professionals who use simulation to improve the safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of health care services.

Prince George Simulation Centre Open House

The Northern Clinical Simulation staff are hosting an open house on September 14 from 12 – 2 pm at our Prince George Simulation Centre located in the Learning and Development Centre at UHNBC. Staff will also be available to answer questions and provide recommendations.

Please note the following guidelines from the BC Simulation Network and the Department of Risk Management will be in place and must be followed:

- Only 4 people will be allowed in at a time
- Hand sanitizer must be used before entering and after leaving the open house
- Mask and gloves must be worn if physical distancing isn't possible
- Equipment will be cleaned between uses

Quality CPR (QCPR) Challenge

Test your CPR skills in our QCPR competition during the open house on September 14, 2020. The first place winner will have their name on the CPR challenge plaque and [receive a prize!](#)

Simulation Demonstrations

We will have demonstrations during the open house with different simulators including [QCPR Anne](#), [SimMan 3G](#), and other [task trainers](#).

Introduction: The Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Standard

NH is well positioned for implementation of the Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Standard with clear and strong alignment to the current [Strategic Plan](#). A key enabling priority in the Strategic Plan relates to "Our People" and states "Northern Health provides services through its people and will work to have those people in place and to help them flourish in their work."

The above statement provides the foundation and organizational focus to support implementation of the Standard. In addition, NH's values of empathy, respect, collaboration and innovation strongly align with all 13 factors of the Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace implementation plan.

Additional information on the Standard and what NH is doing can be found in the [OurNH Article](#).

Staff wellness and more

Resources for staff wellness are available in the right hand sidebar under the heading “Resources for stress and emotional support” on both the [COVID-19 page](#) and the [Pandemic Recovery Toolkit page](#) of Northern Health’s staff intranet, OurNH.

For more information on [staff deals](#), the [NH Community Corner](#), and [RAARs](#), visit [OurNH](#).