



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A twice-weekly update for medical staff

Tuesday, September 22, 2020

Medical Staff Digests are sent out every Tuesday and Thursday.

Sections

COVID-19.....	1
Overdose prevention and response	3
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](#)

COVID-19 case counts and statements

Confirmed NH cases since the beginning of the pandemic, according to the **September 21 provincial update**:

- **255** cases
 - **32** active
 - **11** new
- **2** death (**1** new)

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 21, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – September 17, 2020

COVID-19 testing guidelines: Refresh your memory

As cases of COVID-19 in BC continue to rise, it's important that we remain vigilant in testing. The BCCDC continues to recommend testing in the following cases:

- **COVID-19 testing is not recommended for asymptomatic individuals.**
- Test all individuals with new symptoms compatible with COVID-19, however mild.
- It is particularly important to test symptomatic individuals who:
 - Are residents or staff of long-term care facilities
 - Require admission to hospital or are likely to be admitted
 - Are healthcare workers
 - Are contacts of a known case of COVID-19
 - Are travellers who in the past 14 days returned to BC from outside Canada, or from an area with higher infection rates within Canada
 - Are residents of remote, isolated, or Indigenous communities
 - Live in congregate settings such as work-camps, correctional facilities, shelters, group homes, assisted living and seniors' residences
 - Are homeless or have unstable housing
 - Are essential service providers, such as first responders
- Medical Health Officers may recommend testing as part of public health investigations.

For more information, see the latest [BCCDC COVID-19 adult viral testing guidelines](#).

Q & A: Asymptomatic Testing, Clinical

- In an effort to reduce confusion among front-line staff regarding testing requirements, Northern Health's Population & Public Health team has designed a [Q & A document for testing asymptomatic individuals for COVID-19](#).
- "Asymptomatic" refers to people who have not had symptoms of COVID-19. This guidance does not apply to people who are asymptomatic following a recent episode of confirmed or probable COVID-19 infection.

COVID-19 in-house testing reagents back to current capacity

Northern Health COVID-19 reagents are back to current daily testing capacity.

Effective immediately, all patient groups, with the exception of community outpatients (CMM), SCHOOL, and Tree Planters (TREPL), will be tested in-house during regular Microbiology operating hours.

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

Long-term care/assisted living digest – issue 8

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 information about why visits are being monitored, the importance of maintaining physical distancing during visits, and a survey about the impact of visiting restrictions in long-term care homes and assisted living facilities.

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**
- **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

FNHA: Using compassion to tackle the stigma of addiction

As we face dual public health emergencies, the overdose crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to find new ways to keep people who experience addiction safe, reduce harms, and support loved ones on their healing journeys.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on people who experience addiction. Overdose deaths have increased dramatically in BC since March 2020 – particularly among First Nations people. Illegal drugs have become increasingly toxic and unpredictable during the pandemic; meanwhile, the unintended consequences of some COVID-19 safety protocols have led to a tragic increase in overdose deaths.

The key to responding to the overdose crisis is a sense of compassion towards people who are experiencing addiction – an understanding that every life is valuable and that addiction is complex and challenging.

For more information, see the full [FNHA news story](#).

Anti-stigma resource: NH Learning Hub Course

Health care providers play a key role in creating supportive environments for people who use substances. Drug use stigma prevents people who use drugs from seeking help and creates barriers to accessing lifesaving health care services.

An education resources has been created: [Creating Supportive Environments for People Who Use Substances](#). To access the course visit the [Learning Hub](#).

Other organizational news

News from Across NH

Webinar: Rural and Remote Leadership – The Good, The Bad, and The Other Stuff

September 24, 2020

11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. Pacific Time

Being a health care leader has challenges and opportunities, but being a health care leader in rural and remote settings can add a layer of complexity. Hear about these unique challenges and opportunities from two leaders working in rural and remote BC.

The featured speakers for this webinar are Dr. Becky Temple, NE Medical Director, and Greg Marr, Regional Director, Medical Affairs.

Attendance at this program entitles certified Canadian College of Health Leaders members (CHE / Fellow) to 1.25 Category I credits toward their maintenance of certification requirement.

For more information and to register, see the [event page](#).

Register for the 2020 BC Health Leaders Conference: Oct 29 – 30, 2020

Registration is now open for the 2020 BC Health Leaders Conference to learn how to better navigate the health system challenges that are being faced across the country. Discover how leadership through innovation, creativity, and flexibility can help you find and trust your leadership compass. Explore practices to help guide yourself and others through the issues and opportunities of today's healthcare industry such as:

- Establishing guiding principles (national framework, teams, etc.)
- Being flexible in your leadership practices
- Leveraging and inspiring your team
- Making decisions in times of fiscal constraints
- Being effective environmental stewards
- Navigating challenging ethical situations
- Promoting diversity in the workforce

The BC Health Leaders Conference is a pivotal opportunity for health leaders to come together to learn, share knowledge, and improve leadership skills to work toward better healthcare for all.

For more information and to register, see the [event page](#).

Updated date: Synapse data transfer

The Community Health Record (CHR) project team is completing the decommission of Synapse and transition of electronic medical records for mental health and substance

use information to MOIS/CMOIS and PowerChart. The next step is to transfer clinical documentation from Synapse into CMOIS **September 26-27, 2020.**

Action required: please have all Synapse and CMOIS charting completed by 5:00 PM, Friday, September 25 and be logged out of both Synapse and CMOIS.

How will this impact physicians? What's going to happen to physician consultation notes once Synapse is gone?

For physicians who regularly access Synapse, historical mental health and substance use documentation will be found in CMOIS. Moving forward, acute admission documentation is located in Powerchart, while community visit documentation is located in CMOIS.

If you need access to CMOIS and currently do not have it, please have your clinic manager contact the NH ITS Service Desk at servicedesk@northernhealth.ca.

Stay tuned for more information in a future medical staff digest, about how to access the information from Synapse, which will then be in CMOIS.

For questions, contact Brad Van Dolah, Clinical Informatics Specialist, at Bradley.vandolah@northernhealth.ca.

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](#).