



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A twice-weekly update for medical staff

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

Medical Staff Digests are sent out every Tuesday and Thursday.

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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 **October 9 provincial update**:

- **331** cases
 - **13** active
 - **1** new
- **3** deaths (**0** 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](#) – October 9, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – October 8, 2020

50 mL hand sanitizers back in stock

BC Health Authorities have secured a large supply of 50 mL bottles of alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHS). When this product was in short supply earlier in the year, orders for this product went unfilled. Sites can now look at replenishing their stock of the individual bottles of ABHS. Suggested areas of use include:

- Community care programs
- Collection Centres
- Influenza immunizers
- Fleet vehicles
- Areas where wall mount sanitizers are not available

Correct use of chemotherapy gowns

Chemotherapy gowns are not interchangeable with isolation gowns. A chemotherapy gown is a disposable gown used when handling and mixing hazardous drugs, when there is potential exposure to body fluids during care of patients on cytotoxic precautions, or for environmental services when cleaning these areas.

Correct uses of chemotherapy gowns include:

- Pharmacy compounding areas
- Oncology clinics
- Administration of cytotoxic drugs (except oral tablets/capsules)
- Cleaning of hazardous drug spills
- Handling body fluids during the precautionary period of patients who have received cytotoxic drugs

It is not necessary to don a chemotherapy gown to enter the room of a patient during the precautionary period if there is no risk of exposure to body fluids (e.g., taking blood pressure, delivering food trays, talking to the patient).

Consult the [BC Hazardous Drugs Control Matrix Nursing](#) (OurNH link) for more detailed information on PPE requirements.

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: Sober(er) for October: helping ourselves and others regain balance spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally

When stopping or significantly reducing the use of alcohol or other substances, there are many things to consider. For example, if you have been a heavy user, you might experience withdrawal symptoms.

The fear of withdrawal symptoms prevents some people from stopping their use of substances. There is acute withdrawal, which usually lasts a few days and consists mainly of physical symptoms. However, there is also post-acute withdrawal syndrome (PAWS), which can last from several days to even months, and generally involves more "thinking" and "feeling" symptoms." These can include:

- Memory problems / "foggy thinking"
- Inability to concentrate
- Low motivation to do things
- Irritability
- Anxiety, depression or mood swings

These symptoms are a sign that your body is trying to heal itself from the effects of substance use; your brain is "recalibrating," or adjusting to the changes you are making. This cycle moves from physical discomfort to emotional and psychological discomfort.

We can help ourselves and others in a number of different ways. As FNHA Knowledge Keeper Syexwaliya Ann Whonnock reminds us, "The Ancestors and Elders teach that we need to respect, understand and care about where each of us is at in our life journey, and to help or support one another as best we can. This includes being kind, non-judgemental, and understanding – and listening with an open heart."

[Read the full story on the FNHA website.](#)

Other organizational news

News from Across NH

Prince George Diabetes Education Centre move

The Prince George Diabetes Education Centre will be moving to UHNBC effective Friday October 9, 2020. All current telephone and fax numbers will remain the same.

A referral is required for inpatients and an updated referral form will be released soon.

Address: UHNBC, 1475 Edmonton Street, Prince George, BC V2M 1S2

Phone: 250-565-2464

Fax: 250-565-2792

HealtheLife early adopters program ended

The internal pilot of the [HealtheLife](#) patient portal, HealtheLife Early Adopters Program, ended October 7, 2020. Thank you for everyone who participated and provided feedback. This project would not have been a success without your help.

We also wanted to acknowledge the winners of the free iPads for the [HealtheLife early adopters contest](#).

- 1) Viva Swanson- Fort St. John Leadership Development Advisor
- 2) Charlene Turner- Prince George Billing Clerk
- 3) Dinu Kuttamparambil- Fort St. John Infection Control Practitioner

We are planning a public go-live November 2020. Please stay tuned for more information.

Last day for the BC electronic health record survey

A provincial survey measure current levels of satisfaction with Health Authority Electronic Health Records (EHRs) is coming to a close.

Your responses will be treated as confidential: the results of the survey will be presented in aggregate form and will not include individual responses.

We expect this survey to take 6 minutes, and results will be accepted until end of day Tuesday, October 13. [Take the survey now](#).

Psychological health and safety in the workplace: Factor one

In September, we shared how Northern Health is including the Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace standard into our organization. This standard includes 13 workplace factors of psychological health and safety, and we will be sharing one per month over the next 13 months. The first factor is **Psychological and Social Support**. More information on this factor is available on [OurNH](#).

Cyber Security Awareness Month - Week 3: Computer Week

Phones may be like tiny computers in our pockets, but there are some things they still don't do as well as a good old-fashioned laptop or desktop. Let's reward these important devices with some well-deserved caring.

This week, we'll show you how to show your computer you care by teaching you to:

- [Create complex passphrases](#)
- [Prevent against malware](#)
- [Avoid phishing scams](#)

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](#).