



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A twice-weekly update for medical staff

Tuesday, November 3, 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

- **422** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic
 - Cases currently active: **34**
 - New cases: **1**
 - Currently admitted to ICU: **0**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **3 (0 new)**

As always, it is important that we remain vigilant in our communities.

For the latest provincial numbers, see the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated Monday-Friday. The dashboard may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested.

Surveillance reports, including a breakdown of cases by HSDA, are [posted each Friday by the BCCDC](#).

- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – November 2, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – October 30, 2020

Changes to the COVID-19 Online Clinic and expansion of services

Northern Health is expanding the NH COVID-19 Online Clinic to provide regional virtual primary and community care services through a Northern Health Virtual Clinic. The clinic is doing a soft launch on November 12, 2020, with a focus on providing services to patients in rural and remote communities.

Name and purpose

- The initial goal of the clinic is to provide primary care services for unattached patients and/or where access to care is limited.
- The clinic will still provide screening, assessments and coordination of testing for COVID-19.
- The name of the COVID-19 Online Clinic will be changing to the Northern Health Virtual Clinic, but the phone number will remain the same: 1-844-645-7811.

Pillars of service of the Virtual Clinic:

There are distinct areas of work that will occur through this service:

1. Establish a regional virtual clinic to achieve the objectives of equitable access to culturally safe and quality primary and community care services for northerners
2. Support providers' efforts to use technology to improve access locally
3. Integrate with existing local and provincial virtual primary care, specialist, and specialized service offerings (e.g., Northern Health specialist services, HealthLink BC (811), and Real-Time Virtual Supports (RTVS) pathways)
4. Engage with communities and partners to improve access and the care experience of people whose health and well-being is supported by virtual means.

Hours

The clinic will be open 10 am to 10 pm, 7 days a week, including holidays.

In the coming weeks, more information on the Virtual Clinic will be shared with all Northern Health medical staff, staff, and the public, and webpages will be set up on physicians.northernhealth.ca and northernhealth.ca.

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

Announcing the First Nations Virtual Substance Use & Psychiatry Service

The FNHA is excited to announce the launch of the First Nations Virtual Substance Use and Psychiatry Service. This service is now available to First Nations people and their families living in BC through referral from a health and wellness provider.

The purpose of our new service is to:

1. To provide direct virtual access to addictions specialists and psychiatric care for First Nations people and their family members living in BC
2. To provide addictions medicine and psychiatry services where every client encounter is aligned with the principles and practices of cultural safety and humility
3. To provide addictions medicine and psychiatry services where collaborative care planning and wraparound care services are integral to all client encounters

A reminder as well about FNHA's Virtual Doctor of the Day program, which provides virtual access to primary care (Family Practice Physicians) for First Nations people and their families living in BC.

For more information:

- [Virtual Substance Use & Psychiatry Service webpage](#)
- [Virtual Substance Use & Psychiatry Referral Guide for Providers](#)
- [Virtual Doctor of the Day Webpage](#)
- [Virtual Doctor of the Day Poster](#)

Other organizational news

News from Across NH

Cyber-criminal groups are targeting hospitals and healthcare providers. Don't open or click on unsolicited or suspicious emails in your inbox.

Please share urgently with your staff – see the [printable version](#) of this article.

Northern Health Information Security has become aware that a cyber-criminal group is using a banking [trojan](#) and [ransomware](#) to target hospitals and healthcare providers, including a facility in Quebec.

Journalists reported on October 28 that criminals were preparing to encrypt systems at potentially hundreds of medical centers and hospitals. This was based on a tip from a researcher who had been monitoring communications for the cyber-criminal group.

Within the next 24 hours, [multiple U.S. hospitals](#) were compromised with Ryuk ransomware.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), confirmed these attacks on the healthcare sector in a [joint advisory](#) on October 28. The advisory stated that [Trickbot \(a modular banking trojan\)](#) is being used to target the industry, and that the activity poses an increased and imminent threat.

One of the most effective ways for cyber-criminals to gain unauthorized access to our organization is through phishing emails. Phishing is a cyber-criminal activity that is designed to trick us into providing sensitive, confidential, or private information (such as usernames and passwords), by sending forged emails disguised as being from trustworthy sources.

If you see a suspicious email in your inbox, you may be just a click away from compromising the organization's security. Please pay close attention to, and do not open, unsolicited or strange emails that may end up in your inbox. Follow this [guide to report a suspicious email](#) or call the ITS ServiceDesk 24/7 at 250-565-2784 or 1-888-558-4357.

Although security teams from all health authorities across BC and healthcare providers across Canada are sharing indicators of compromise and threat intelligence, we all play a key role in keeping the network and our own information secure. Learn to be more cyber-aware by taking the [Information Security LearningHub course](#).

Additional resources:

- [More information on phishing](#)
- [Reporting a malicious/suspicious email](#)
- [LearningHub course on Information Security](#)

For questions about phishing or ransomware, contact info-security@northernhealth.ca.

Webex Presentation: Revised Clinical Practice Standards for Infant Feeding, Thursday, Nov. 5, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

All NH staff are welcome to join the presentation. Lise Luppens, Population Health Dietitian, Regional Lead Early Years Nutrition, and Randi Leanne Parsons, Regional Nursing Lead, Maternal, Infant, Child will present on two recently revised clinical practice standards. See the [Webex details and link to join](#).

Does extreme weather affect your work? Tell us about it in this survey

Does extreme weather have an impact on your job? Help us plan for more resilient health care by taking this [survey](#).

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](#).