



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A twice-weekly update for medical staff*

**Tuesday, November 17, 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](#)

### COVID-19 case counts and statements

As of November 16, **510** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **62**
- New cases: **14**
- Currently in hospital: **9**
  - Currently admitted to HAU/ICU in hospital: **9**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **5 (1 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.

BCCDC Surveillance reports, including case breakdown by HSDA, are [posted each Friday](#).

- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – November 16, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – November 13, 2020

## Remdesivir allowed for use outside of clinical trials due to rising COVID-19 hospitalizations in BC

While remdesivir has not yet shown a mortality benefit or a reduction in length of hospital stay, it may reduce the time to clinical recovery which could potentially lead to a reduced length of stay.

In light of the sudden increase in BC COVID-19 case counts and hospitalizations in early November, and due to the potential to reduce length of stay, the BC Remdesivir Review Advisory Working Group has decided to allow access to remdesivir outside of clinical trials for patients meet satisfy the criteria below:

1. Age 12 years or older with a body weight of at least 40 kg
2. Requires supplemental oxygen at the time of remdesivir initiation
3. **Does not** require invasive, or non-invasive, mechanical ventilation at the time of remdesivir initiation
4. Has an eGFR greater than 30 mL/min and ALT less than 5 times the upper limit of normal at the time of remdesivir initiation

Stock is still limited and has been allocated to each health authority according to cases.

**Northern Health will stock remdesivir at our designated COVID-19 facilities, UHNBC in Prince George and Mills Memorial Hospital (MMH) in Terrace.**

**Dosing:** The recommended dosing is 200 mg IV on day one, followed by 100 mg IV daily for 4 more days or until hospital discharge, whichever comes first. If patients still require supplemental oxygen at day 5 of therapy, consider continuing remdesivir for up to 10 days.

If a COVID-19 positive patient admitted to either UHNBC or MMH meets the criteria listed above, the most responsible physician and or a clinical pharmacist must complete a [non-formulary medication request form](#) and send the completed form to the hospital pharmacy along with the order for remdesivir in order to gain access to the drug.

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

## View the Northern Health COVID-19 response feedback executive summary report

Thank you to all NH staff and physicians who completed the COVID-19 Response Feedback survey. Northern Health's Emergency Operations Centre's focus for creating this survey was to gain insight into NH's COVID-19 response: what is working well, what challenges or barriers do you wish could be removed, and what recommendations do you have for improvement?

[View the executive summary report](#)

Individual reports containing specific feedback for each service sector or general response function will be sent to leadership in those areas. You can view these individual reports or the complete report by contacting [Research and Evaluation](#).

## **Reminder! The Northern Health Virtual Clinic soft launched Monday, November 16**

The Northern Health Virtual Clinic soft launched on November 16, with a focus on providing primary care services to patients in the most rural and remote communities.

Visit <https://www.northernhealth.ca/services/digital-health/virtual-clinic> for more information. A supplemental page on the physicians website with more information is also coming soon ([www.physicians.northernhealth.ca](http://www.physicians.northernhealth.ca)).

For questions, contact Dori Pears at [dori.pears@northernhealth.ca](mailto:dori.pears@northernhealth.ca) or 778-349-4778.

## **NEW Long-term Care/Assisted Living Digest – Issue 11: Information for residents and families**

The long-term care task group is producing updates twice a month for residents and families of long-term care homes and assisted living facilities.

This issue of the update provides information about new masking guidelines, Christmas and holiday plans, outbreak guidelines in long-term care homes, and the fall flu campaign.

## **New BCCDC COVID-19 modelling and projections are available, see the current trends of COVID-19 in the province.**

New modelling and projection figures are available from the BCCDC. These figures represent the latest epidemiological numbers and data trends and were used in the November 12 COVID-19 joint statement.

This update includes information on:

- Epidemiology (how and where the virus has affected people in BC)
- COVID-19 testing and cases among school-aged children
- Health human resources
- Lab services capacity
- Hospital capacity
- Surgical renewal commitment
- Influenza vaccine updates

All BCCDC COVID-19 modelling and projections are available on both the BCCDC website and on the modelling and projections page of the NH physician website.

## **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

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### What you can do in your community to support those at risk of an overdose during COVID-19

Winter conditions have arrived leading to increased vulnerability for people without a warm place to stay. This results in more small groups congregating for warmth, and an increased risk of people using substances alone due to cold weather and COVID-19 isolation restrictions.

#### Drug Toxicity Alerts:

The current Provincial [Overdose Alert](#) continues. Please be aware that the current drug supply is extremely toxic. Recent reports includes contamination of both opioids as well as stimulants. It is important to be aware that all drugs may be contaminated and that more than usual naloxone may be needed to reverse an overdose. Distributing more than usual amounts of naloxone, and bulk requests are supported by NH.

#### What you can do:

It is important to ensure that necessary healthcare and harm reduction services targeting vulnerable populations are open within communities. Many overdose prevention sites continue to provide drug-checking services.

- Consider distributing more than usual amounts of naloxone
- Support requests for bulk amounts of naloxone
- Provide outreach services offering phone screening and supply distribution to clients to minimize contact and promote physical distancing

#### Additional Resources to support clients during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- [Supporting Harm Reduction Distribution in the Context of COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources for NH Staff and Community Partners Working with Populations who Experience Vulnerabilities](#)

## Other organizational news

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### News from Across NH

#### Expression of interest: Medical Lead – NH Virtual Clinic

Eligible physicians are invited to indicate their interest in the following position:

#### Medical Lead – NH Virtual Clinic

- 0.20 FTE
- One year term
- Expressions of interest must be delivered in written form with a current resume by November 25, 2020.

The Medical Lead, NH Virtual Clinic works collaboratively with the Regional Manager, Primary and Community Care to provide leadership and support for the strategic and operational planning, oversight, and evaluation of the NH Virtual Clinic.

For the full role summary, as well as qualifications and experience, see the [full posting](#).

#### Resumes can be delivered in person, by mail, or emailed to:

Dr. Ronald Chapman

[Ronald.Chapman@northernhealth.ca](mailto:Ronald.Chapman@northernhealth.ca)

600 – 299 Victoria Street Prince George, BC V2L 5B8

Fax: (250) 564-7196

#### Get a free shipment of SmartMom promotional material for your practice: Canada's 1<sup>st</sup> text-message-based prenatal education program

SmartMom is a free prenatal education program that texts prenatal clients' information from trusted sources. Let your prenatal clients in your communities know about the valuable information and resources available to them through SmartMom.

SmartMom works best when it's shared as early in the pregnancy as possible. This could be either during the pregnancy confirmation or the first prenatal appointments. For more information, check out the new NH webpage: [SmartMom Prenatal Program](#).

The following promotional resources are available to order at [NH Document Source](#). To support the promotion of SmartMom in the north, the Northern Health Perinatal Program is funding a print run for maternity care providers (including general practitioners, nurse practitioners, midwives, and obstetricians):

- [SmartMom tear-off pad](#) (Document Source #10-030-6116D)
- [SmartMom poster](#) (Document Source #10-030-6116)
- [SmartMom key messages and enrollment guide](#) (Document Source order #10-030-6116C)

Maternity care providers that are interested in receiving a package of SmartMom promotional materials should email [Randi.Parsons@northernhealth.ca](mailto:Randi.Parsons@northernhealth.ca) by **Friday, November 27, 2020**.

### **Upcoming MOIS / CMOIS 2.26 Release**

A new version of MOIS/CMOIS will be released this weekend (Nov 21-22). The release will include a number of new features to support clinical workflows, as well as correct existing issues.

Downtime for the upgrade will start at 8 pm on Friday, November 20. We intend to have the system back up as soon as possible. Services which use CMOIS on the weekend may have access to it as early as noon on Saturday 21. ITS alerts will be sent when the system is unavailable and when it's available again.

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

### **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 a more resilient health care by taking this [survey](#).

We want your perspective on how extreme weather has affected your clinical role and impacts to patient care delivery and how departments can lessen these impacts.

There are only two weeks left in the survey, make sure your thoughts are heard! Survey closes Nov. 30, 2020.

This survey was developed in partnership with the lower mainland health organizations.

## **Wellness and more**

Resources for wellness are available on the [Health and Wellness page](#) of the Physicians Website.

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