



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A twice-weekly update for medical staff*

**Thursday, November 19, 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

**552** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **75**
- New cases: **13**
- Currently in hospital: **14**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **5**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **5**

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 18, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – November 13, 2020

## Ministry of Health: Physician pandemic payment - Fall/Winter 2020

In recognition of additional planning work required as a result of the [Ministry of Health's Management of COVID-19 Health Sector Plan for Fall/Winter 2020/21](#), released in September 2020, the Ministry of Health is providing additional funding for physician time spent on associated planning activities. Planning may be initiated by the Health Authorities, Medical Staff Associations (MSAs) or Divisions of Family Practice (DOFP).

Physicians will be compensated to a maximum of 20 hours for active planning performed between October 19, 2020 and March 31, 2021 at the Physician Master Agreement 2020/21 sessional hourly rates.

For more information, and qualifying criteria, see the [full memo](#) and [FAQ](#).

## Northern Health urges COVID-19 precautions as cases surge across the province

Northern Health is urging caution as we see COVID-19 activity surging across the province. NH is concerned with the upward trend and frequency of new cases and clusters in the region.

Recent orders in the Fraser Valley issued by Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry to address cases in the Lower Mainland are not currently directed at Northern Health; however, we need your support to avoid more stringent measures. We are encouraging against non-essential travel and are asking people to ensure they are following all of the current orders, guidance, and advice.

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

## How to read the BCCDC dashboard hospitalization and ICU numbers

There are times when the hospitalization numbers and the ICU numbers on the BCCDC dashboard appear to contradict each other. This is because the data for these two statistics come from two different sources and are collected at different times.

It's important to also remember that this dashboard is a once-a-day snapshot and that admissions, changes in status, and discharges are continually occurring.

The two numbers should not be added together, and should instead be read as two separate items.

## 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

#### **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**.

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](#).