



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

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

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

- Cases currently active: **153**
- New cases: **34**
- Currently in hospital: **18**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **9**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **6**

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 23, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – November 20, 2020

Acceptable sample collection containers for COVID-19 have changed: Please discontinue use of APTIMA swabs immediately

As Northern Health starts using new testing platforms, the acceptable sample types have changed.

Acceptable samples:

- YOCON swabs are preferred (e-Rex# 5007145)
- COPAN swabs
- STARPLEX swabs
- SALINE GARGLE for outpatient testing only

Discontinued swabs:

APTIMA swabs will no longer be considered an acceptable sample container. If collected for respiratory viruses, tests may need to be cancelled or have limited testing. These swabs should be reserved for STI testing only.

Please switch to one of the acceptable sample swabs types immediately and return any unused APTIMA swabs to inventory.

Confused about contact tracing? Check out these new Northern Health resources

Contact tracing is a very effective tool to stop the spread of this virus: it helps keep us all safe; however, many people are confused as to how the process actually works.

To help explain this critical step in our COVID-19 prevention strategy, Northern Health has prepared two contact tracing handouts. Please feel free to share these with friends, family, patients, or partners that may find them helpful:

- [How contact tracing works, a linear journey](#)
- [What's contact tracing](#)

New Long-term Care/Assisted Living Digest – Issue 12: Masking guidelines, annual rate letters, and more

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 the new masking guidelines, how outbreaks are determined, and a reminder about annual rate letters.

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

It's National Addictions Awareness Week; see what you can do to help those struggling with addiction

It's National Addictions Awareness Week – a time to be an “Ambassador for Change”. Here's what you can do to help:

- Reduce stigma – addiction challenges are health conditions that deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Know the signs of overdose and [what to do](#).
- Stay safer by buddying up when using, or if using alone, download the [Lifeguard app](#).
- Carry naloxone, or support requests for naloxone.

Learn more at: <https://www.stopoverdose.gov.bc.ca/>.

Other organizational news

News from Across NH

Get a free shipment of SmartMom promotional material for your practice: Canada's 1st 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 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](#).