



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A twice-weekly update for medical staff*

**Thursday, November 26, 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

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

- Cases currently active: **181**
- New cases: **35**
- Currently in hospital: **26**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **11**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **6**

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 25, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – November 20, 2020

## COVID-19 collection guidelines have been updated

The [COVID-19 collection guidelines](#) have been updated to reflect current acceptable sample collection devices.

## Saline gargle testing has been expanded to include adults

The COVID-19 saline gargle test has recently been expanded to include everyone over the age of four. The gargle will be offered at [designated collection centres](#) across NH, but will not be available as part of emergency or inpatient care, or at doctor's offices.

The saline gargle test is validated only for COVID-19. It can't be used to test for other viruses such as influenza or RSV. **Any patient who needs multi-viral testing will still need a nasopharyngeal swab.**

The saline gargle can be offered to priority populations, including healthcare workers, and will be tested in-house at designated NH labs for the fastest turnaround time.

The preparation for saline gargle for adults is the same as for children: they must be able to swish and gargle for 30 seconds, and in the hour before their appointment, they must not have had anything to eat or drink, smoked or vaped, or brushed their teeth. Please refer to the [COVID-19 Adult Gargle Instructions](#).

To request a test, call the Northern Health Virtual Clinic at **1-844-645-7811**. Note that tests are available for people who meet the criteria of the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#). **Tests are \*not\* available for asymptomatic pre-employment/pre-travel screening**

## Respiratory virus testing: Influenza testing will be done in combination with COVID-19 testing

In addition to COVID-19 testing, **influenza A/B/RSV testing will be performed as per routine seasonal practice.**

Influenza A/B/RSV testing is recommended for:

- Those who are pregnant
- Those in a long-term care facility or in an outbreak
- Those hospitalized or those sick enough to be hospitalized
- Children less than five years old, who will automatically be tested for both COVID-19 and influenza A/B/RSV

**Please note that only one sample needs to be collected for COVID-19 and influenza A/B/RSV.** Testing is performed by laboratory microbiology departments during routine operational hours; please refer to your local testing site for details.

## So you've been tested for COVID-19: Now what?

Have you had a COVID-19 test recently? Your results may be coming to you faster than you think.

There are now many options for how you [get your test results](#).

With the BCCDC's new option to get results by text message or SMS, you can choose to get your COVID-19 test results on your phone.

If your results are positive, it's likely that you'll get a text before you're contacted by Northern Health's Public Health team.

Don't worry! This is normal, and someone from Public Health will contact you in the next 48-72 hours to give you more instructions, and to begin the [contact tracing process](#).

For more information and next steps after receiving your test results, [see the full story](#).

### **Northern Health Pandemic Response fall/winter plan**

The [NH Pandemic Response fall/winter plan](#) contains a current and historic picture of COVID-19 in Northern BC, followed by the goals, planning principles, assumptions, and actions currently under way.

A [high-level infographic](#) of the COVID-19 pandemic response is available on OurNH.

### **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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### **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

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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.

#### Upcoming Evidence to Action Workshops - Register for any or all of the four sessions in this workshop series!

This is a great opportunity for clinical nurse educators, executive leads, and leaders working on program improvements. The workshop provides an overview of the services provided by Education & Development, Library Services and the Policy Office.

#### Learn how to:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of Northern Health resources available to support the development of high quality evidence-informed education, policy documents and programs.
- Gain exposure to case scenarios of excellence within Northern Health regarding obtaining evidence, developing education and developing or revising policies or clinical practice standards.

- Demonstrate comprehension of copyright laws and the appropriate use of images.
- Increase proficiency in writing concise, understandable documents.

Register for any of the sessions by clicking the links below. Microsoft Teams meeting invitations will be sent out to registrants before each session.

- December 9, 2020: [Introduction of Education/Library/Policy Services](#)
- January 13, 2021: [Best Practices](#)
- February 10, 2021: [Readability](#)
- March 10, 2021: [Technical Tips/Copyright Images](#)

For more information, please contact [gail.haeussler@northernhealth.ca](mailto:gail.haeussler@northernhealth.ca).

### **The top five holiday scams to be aware of in 2020**

As the holidays approach, the scam attempts increase. As you're doing your holiday shopping this year, be careful and cautious. Here are the top five current holiday scams:

- Fake Black Friday / Cyber Monday specials
- Charity tricksters
- Complimentary vouchers or gift cards
- Fake mobile apps
- Bogus shipping notices

For more information, see the [infographic on OurNH](#).

### **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](#).