



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A twice-weekly update for medical staff

Thursday, December 24, 2020

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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](#)

COVID-19 case counts and statements

As of December 23, **1,651** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **482**
- New cases: **31**
- Currently in hospital: **51**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **18**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **16**

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.

Situation 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](#) – December 23, 2020
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – December 18, 2020

N95s vs. reusable respirators

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a global shortage of N95 respirators. To ensure we have an adequate supply of respirators, NH implemented reusable respirators in target departments. Reusable respirators are either elastomeric half-facepiece respirators or powered air purifying respirators (PAPR).

Some key points to remember about respirator usage:

- Both N95s and reusable respirators provide the required level of protection against airborne infectious diseases.
- A reusable respirator is not used to provide a higher level of protection to specific staff or departments.
- Targeted departments for reusable respirators were selected due to their high usage of N95s.

Respiratory protection for COVID-19 (N95 or reusable) is only required when an aerosol generating procedure is performed. Droplet/contact precautions and the use of a procedure mask are recommended in all other situations.

What model of N95 do I wear?

Have you been fit-tested, but can't remember what model of N95 you need? To check your fit-test record:

1. Log into any NH computer with your username and password.
2. Open the [Employee Fit Test Record report](#).

The report will tell you the model of N95 you were fitted to and on what date.

Until further notice, fit tests are valid for a two-year period as long as you can obtain a successful seal check. If your only valid fit test is to the 3M 1870+, you will need to be fitted to an alternate N95, as this model is temporarily unavailable.

Health and Safety Bulletin – FAQ on eating and drinking in clinical areas

An [FAQ](#) has been developed on eating and drinking guidelines in clinical areas answering the following questions:

- Why is eating or drinking in these areas a safety hazard?
- What about drinking water?
- Where can we eat or drink?
- What about patients or visitors?
- Where can I find more info?

For detailed information, please view the document on the [OurNH COVID-19 Page](#).

Northern Health Virtual Clinic: Data on patient visits

The Northern Health Virtual Clinic supports after-hours access to COVID-19 and primary care services for those who cannot easily access these services in their communities. The goal is to connect people to their local primary care home wherever possible. We will share Virtual Clinic data with you twice a week.

Monday, December 21

- 228 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 11 primary care provider appointments (3 primary care (PC) Prince George (2) and Fort St John and 8 COVID-19 related)

Tuesday December 22

- 226 COVID-19 nursing assessments

- 8 primary care provider appointments (1 primary care (PC) Smithers, 1 primary care (PC) Houston, 1 primary care (PC) Prince George, 1 primary care (PC) Prince Rupert, 1 primary care (PC) + COVID -19 Ft St John and 3 COVID-19 related)

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

Staying safer this holiday season

People who use drugs are at a high risk of harm during the holiday season. Coupled with COVID-19 isolation, the season brings additional risk of overdose deaths.

Please help prevent overdoses by having naloxone in the hands of anyone who might witness an overdose.

More information for people who use substances and how to stay safe during this pandemic can be found at:

- [Harm reduction information for people who use substances](#)
- [COVID-19 and Substance Use Over the Holiday Season](#)

Other organizational news

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](#).