



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A twice-weekly update for medical staff

January 26, 2021

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Expressions of interest wanted: Medical Lead – Primary and Community Care

Northern Health would like to invite eligible physicians to indicate their interest in the following position: Medical Lead – Primary and Community Care, 0.40 FTE

Expressions of interest must be delivered in written form with a current resume by **February 11, 2021**. For full details, see this [document](#).

COVID-19

NH's COVID-19 resources

- On the NH physician website:
 - [COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- On OurNH:
 - [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#)
 - [Pandemic Recovery Toolkit](#)

COVID-19 case counts and statements

As of January 25, **3,213** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **512**
- New cases: **29**
- Currently in hospital: **47**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **16**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **61**

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](#) – January 25, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – January 22, 2021

Repeat testing when new symptoms arise in the context of a previous positive COVID-19 test

Although there is no official Provincial guidance on this topic, Provincial consensus among Medical Health Officers and supported by Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry is that it is not useful to re-test someone with new COVID-19-like symptoms within two months of the original positive COVID-19 test.

Re-infection rates in the two months following an infection are extremely low, and shedding of non-infectious viral particles frequently persists for weeks to months following the original infection. A repeat positive test result almost certainly represents this prolonged post-infectious shedding, and not a new COVID-19 infection.

If new symptoms arise within the two months following a COVID-19 infection, decisions regarding isolation in hospitals or elsewhere should be based on symptom profile, clinical judgement, and usual infection control guidelines for other communicable diseases, and not based on a COVID-19 test.

For a printable version, visit this [memo](#).

Updated PPE guidelines for support services / facilities maintenance now available

There have been recent updates to this document: [PPE Required in Patient Care Areas During COVID-19 Pandemic: Acute and Long-term Care – Support Services/Facilities Maintenance](#)

Updates reflect the use of goggles as the standard eye protection for support services/facilities maintenance, as well as clarification on masking requirements.

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.

Thursday, Jan 21

- 215 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 22 primary care provider appointments (9 primary care from Smithers, Gitnyow, Terrace, Prince George, Wonowon, Nazko, and Bear Lake, and 13 COVID-19 related)

Friday, Jan 22

- 183 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 28 primary care provider appointments (4 primary care from Prince George Halfway River, and Prince Rupert, and 24 COVID-19 related)

Saturday, Jan 23

- 152 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 8 primary care provider appointments (4 primary care from Prince George, Terrace, and Fort Nelson, and 4 COVID-19 related)

Sunday, Jan 24

- 152 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 13 primary care provider appointments (13 COVID-19 related)

COVID-19 outbreak at St. Paul's Hospital cardiac units: Diversion plan extended

A COVID-19 outbreak in St. Paul's Hospital cardiac wards continues to limit capacity to receive cardiac transfers at both St. Paul's and Vancouver General Hospital. Cardiac patients requiring transfer should continue to be diverted, when possible, to avoid these two sites until further notice.

For details, visit this [document](#).

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

Learn how Episodic Overdose Prevention Services (e-OPS) can support overdose prevention in the north

To prevent overdose deaths, episodic overdose prevention services (e-OPS) are starting to be offered in the NH region. E-OPS allows providers to observe substance use anywhere and anytime.

E-OPS supports health and social service providers, including peer or experiential workers to observe substance use wherever overdoses may occur — not only at a fixed site with an address like a Supervised Consumption Site or Overdose Prevention Site.

- [Overdose Resources: eOPS](#)

To find procedures and more information, visit the [BCCDC](#) or contact the NH Harm Reduction team at nancy.dhaliwal@northernhealth.ca.

Other organizational news

Wednesday, January 27, 2021: Chronic kidney disease CME opportunity

BC Renal is hosting an accredited, one-hour education webinar for primary care providers:

- Topic: Acute Kidney Injury (Dr. Peter Birks)
- Date/Time: January 27, 2021 at 12:00 PM

Register [here](#) for this online CME.

Reminder: Required Organizational Practice — Information at Care Transitions

The accurate and timely exchange of information is necessary to ensure a smooth transition of care, minimize misunderstanding, and reduce the need for clients and families to repeat information.

Depending on the nature of the transition (unit or facility), relevant information must be provided to the receiving care providers. Such information may include allergies, medications, diagnoses, test results, advance directives, etc.

Northern Health has improved documentation tools related to transition of care information. It is important to have an accurate and timely exchange of information during transitions of care. Clients/families also need information on the reason for the transition, in order to make decisions and support their own care.

See also these policies on OurNH: [Transition of Care Communication](#) and [Patient Transfers](#).

For more information on Required Organizational Practices (ROPs), see Accreditation Canada's [ROP Handbook](#).

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](#).