



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A twice-weekly update for medical staff*

**February 2, 2021**

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## COVID-19

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### 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 February 1, **3,489** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **359**
- New cases: **28**
- Currently in hospital: **32**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **15**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **74**

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](#) – February 1, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – January 22, 2021

## Northern Health's most recent vaccine clinics

See stories and photos from Northern vaccine clinics in these recent Facebook posts:

- [Mackenzie and District Hospital, and McLeod Lake](#)
- [Chetwynd General Hospital](#)
- [Tumbler Ridge Community Health Centre](#)

Even with the COVID-19 vaccines, we still need to follow all the [orders and guidelines for public health and safety](#). This will help keep us all safe.

For more information on vaccines:

- See Northern Health's new [vaccine information page](#)
- For immunization numbers, see "Vaccine supply and administered" on the [provincial dashboard](#) (works best in Chrome).
- See details on vaccine distribution: [BCCDC: BC's plan for vaccine distribution](#).
- Follow Northern Health on social media, where we share the most up-to-date information on vaccine clinics, outbreaks, new provincial orders, and more:
  - [Facebook](#)
  - [Twitter](#)
  - Spread the good news! Like and share this Facebook post, which provides general info on COVID-19 vaccines throughout the North: [COVID-19 vaccine arrives in Prince George](#)
- For local vaccine information for your community, check out the [Northern Health Facebook community groups](#).

## COVID-19 outbreak at St. Paul's Hospital cardiac units resolved: Resume normal process

Cardiac transfers to St. Paul's Hospital and Vancouver General Hospital can resume the normal post-pandemic process now that the COVID-19 outbreak has been resolved.

For more information, read the full memo: [COVID-19 Outbreak at St Paul's Hospital Cardiac Units Resolved](#).

## COVID-19 Treatments: Evidence-based provincial recommendation updates

The BC COVID-19 Therapeutics Committee (CTC) recently revised their clinical practice guidance regarding tocilizumab injection for the treatment of patients with severe COVID-19 requiring life support measures, and colchicine in non-hospitalized patients with mild COVID-19.

For details around the evidence reviewed and specific recommendations for use, please refer to the memos on tocilizumab and colchicine on the physicians' website:

- [Tocilizumab \(ACTEMRA\) injection for COVID-19: Use and access](#)
- [Colchicine for the treatment of non-hospitalized COVID-19 patients](#)

For more information on the most current research on these therapies and others for management of COVID-19, refer to the most up to date guidelines provided by the [BC CTC](#).

## Family doctors to receive one-time payment as care providers for high-risk patients

A new GPSC one-time payment with a minimum of \$1,000 will support eligible family doctors who manage high-risk patients during the current COVID-19 and influenza season.

For more information, see this post on the NH physician website: [GPSC: New one-time payment will support family doctors to deliver new 'care bundle' for high-risk patients.](#)

## Updated Eye Protection Guidelines

Based on recommendations from the Public Health Agency of Canada, NH has removed safety glasses from the list of acceptable eye protection for COVID-19. Acceptable eye protection now consists of goggles and face shields.

All staff who are working within 2 metres of a patient/client/resident are required to wear either goggles or a face shield. This applies to acute care, long-term care and community health services. For more information, please see these updated guidance documents:

- [PPE Required in Patient Care Areas – Acute and LTC](#)
- [PPE Required in Patient Care Areas – Support Services/Facilities Maintenance](#)
- [PPE Use in Community Health Services](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfection of Eye/Facial Protection](#)
- [PPE FAQs](#)

All sites are asked to start the transition from safety glasses to either goggles/ face shields as soon as possible. This transition may occur over a number of weeks, while extra supplies of eye protection are put in place throughout the region.

### What's the difference between safety glasses and goggles?

- Safety glasses do not have a strap. They are looser fitting and allow air in and around the eye area due to small gaps.
- Goggles include a strap to secure the goggles over your eyes and fit tightly against the face to form a seal around the eyes.

## 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 28

- 191 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 27 primary care provider appointments (5 primary care from Smithers, Terrace, Prince Rupert, and Bear Lake, and 22 COVID-19 related)

### Friday, Jan 29

- 203 COVID-19 nursing assessments

- 27 primary care provider appointments (11 primary care from Prince George, Prince Rupert, Blueberry Creek, Medicine Hat, Kitwanga, and Terrace, and 16 COVID-19 related)

### **Saturday, Jan 30**

- 135 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 15 primary care provider appointments (15 primary care from Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Telkwa, Fort St. James, and Houston)

### **Sunday, Jan 31**

- 141 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 10 primary care provider appointments (6 primary care from Prince George, Kitimat, Fort St. John, Quesnel, and Terrace, and 4 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**

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### **Naloxone saves lives**

Having naloxone available at the scene of an opioid overdose is crucial to saving that person's life. To get a kit, visit the site locator at [Toward the Heart](#) or call your local health unit.

When using naloxone outdoors in the winter cold, be aware that naloxone liquid can freeze in the metal needle and clog it, causing a blockage. To prevent this, draw up the naloxone right before you use it.

## **Other organizational news**

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### **Embrace winter: Winter Health & Fitness Week, February 1 - 7**

The organizers of the annual [National Health and Fitness Day](#) have decided to host a week-long, winter-themed follow-up from **Feb. 1 to 7, 2021**. There will be a photo challenge and an [easy-to-follow schedule](#) for daily workouts. We'd love to see the many ways you are getting out

and celebrating winter! Send your photos to [healthpromotions@northernhealth.ca](mailto:healthpromotions@northernhealth.ca) for a chance to be featured on NH social media channels!

## **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](#).