



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A weekly update for medical staff*

**May 11, 2021**

## **Clinical guidelines**

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### **Updated order set: COVID-19 adult admission orders (non-ICU)**

As per the recent BC CTC recommendations for high dose VTE prophylaxis in severe COVID inpatients that do not have risk factors for serious bleeds, the NH Therapeutics committee has updated the [COVID admission order set for non-ICU patients](#) (DocuSource 10-800-5003).

The BC CTC has recommended that high dose (therapeutic dose) VTE prophylaxis only be initiated in severe patients who have been admitted to hospital in the last 72 hours (and where clinically appropriate for patient to receive high dose prophylaxis). As such, patients currently on VTE prophylaxis at standard dosing that have been admitted for over 72 hours will not be switched to high dose.

For more information, please see this [BC CTC memo](#).

### **Updated Point-of-Care-Risk Assessment (PCRA) tool**

The BCCDC has released an [updated PCRA tool](#) to help health care workers assess the likelihood of exposure for themselves and/or others to infectious agents and the selection of appropriate PPE.

- A PCRA is a routine practice, performed before every patient/client/resident interaction.
- Your PCRA informs the selection of appropriate actions and personal protective equipment to minimize the risk of exposure through assessment of the patient, the task and environment.
- The PCRA tool and PPE selection aligns with the PPE guidelines released from Northern Health and BCCDC.
- If you have questions about PPE selection or using the PCRA tool please speak to your supervisor and/or local PPE champion

## 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 May 10, 7,357 cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **160**
- New cases: **11**
- Currently in hospital: **10**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **4**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **142**

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.

As well, for a visual comparison of COVID-19 cases in BC by HSDA to other Canadian and global jurisdictions, see the [COVID-19 Epidemiology app](#). It's updated on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – May 10, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – May 5, 2021

### COVID-19 vaccine interchangeability

COVID-19 vaccine interchangeability for mRNA vaccines can be done on a case-by-case basis. As much as possible, it is best to complete a COVID-19 series with the same product, however, if the product is unknown or unavailable, the series can be completed with an interchanged product. When this situation occurs, on a case-by-case basis, immunizers will use the following new resources to support interpretation of the BCCDC guidelines:

- [Practice update](#) for mRNA vaccine interchangeability on a case-by-case situation, which includes:
  - [InfoSheet: COVID-19 vaccine interchangeability](#)
  - [Interchangeability Process: COVID-19 vaccine](#)

Links to the InfoSheet and Interchangeability Process also found in the Practice Update.

### New COVID-19 updates and changes made to the BCCDC website

Please note that the following changes and updates have been made to information listed on the BCCDC website.

**Immunization Manual:**

COVID-19 vaccination materials were updated in the [Immunization Manual](#) and [COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit for Health Professionals](#) page. The updates have been summarized in the latest [Admin Circular](#) and include the addition of the Janssen vaccine, change to the age for the use of the Pfizer vaccine, and others:

- [COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine BNT162b2 \(Pfizer-BioNTech\)](#)
- [COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine mRNA-1273 \(Moderna\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine ChAdOx1-S \[recombinant\] \(AstraZeneca/Verity Pharmaceuticals\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Ad26.COV2.S \[recombinant\] \(Janssen\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Screening Checklist](#)

**Vaccination handouts for the public:**

The [HealthLink BC File on COVID-19 vaccines](#) and [Vaccine Aftercare](#) handouts have been updated to include the Janssen vaccine, information about the second dose and more on the [Getting a Vaccine](#) and [COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit for Health Professionals](#) page. Translations will be added soon.

**Priority COVID-19 vaccinations now available for pregnant people**

All pregnant people who are age 16+ are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccines as a priority population through B.C.'s Immunization Plan.

"All Health Canada-approved vaccines are safe and effective, and I encourage everyone to register and receive their vaccine as soon as they are eligible. Today, this includes people who are pregnant," said Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.'s provincial health officer. "We have reviewed the data here in B.C. and this shows pregnant people experience severe illness from COVID-19 at a rate that is similar to people who are in their 50s. By prioritizing pregnant people today, we add another layer of protection for them, their babies and their communities."

To book a vaccine, people who are pregnant can:

- Register at [gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated](http://gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated) if they have not done so already,
- Phone 1-833-838-2323 and identify as being pregnant. Online booking for pregnant people is not available.

For more information, see the [Government of B.C. news release](#)

**Update on COVID-19 case and contact management**

On March 17, 2021, Northern Health began expanding the scope of contact tracing and notification to additional settings and circumstances. Through April, the scope continued to expand and on May 5, 2021, full contact tracing for all close contacts of cases was resumed. Full contact tracing depends on available staffing resources and disease levels. See [memo](#).

**Key changes include:**

- People in more settings and circumstances are receiving contact tracing
- The [CCM process](#) and [structure](#) has been adapted to accommodate full contact tracing
- New teams have been established to support key functions

- All teams have been re-named to better reflect their functions
- Certain staff will be trained into new teams to ensure they are operating to top of scope

**More information:**

Additional information on this change was shared at the April 15 CCM all-staff tailgate meeting. The [recording](#) and [a Q&A document](#) are available on the [COVID-19 UCDR all-staff page](#).

**Information for primary care providers:**

- This communication is for your information and to ensure you have the most up to date information to provide to your patients.
- If you have questions, call the Medical Health Officer on call:
  - Call UHNBC Switchboard (250-565-2000) – Press 7.
  - Ask for the Medical Health Officer on call.

For more information, review the [memo](#) and the [frequently asked questions document](#).

**COVID-19 update for BC Hydro Site C project**

Additional COVID-19 cases associated with an outbreak declared by NH medical health officers on April 28, 2021, among contracted workforces at the Site C hydroelectric dam project in Northeast BC have been identified.

To date, in association with this outbreak (involving separate clusters of COVID-19 activity since March 2021), there have been 39 lab-confirmed cases identified among various contractors (an increase of five).

A total of eight cases, involving two contractors, are currently active (31 have recovered).

For more details, [read the full story here](#)

**COVID-19 outbreak declared over at Acropolis Manor in Prince Rupert**

Northern Health medical health officers have declared an end to the COVID-19 outbreak at Acropolis Manor in Prince Rupert.

In total, five residents tested positive for COVID-19 in association with the outbreak that was declared April 3, 2021, and four have since recovered. One resident who had tested positive, passed away. There were no associated staff cases.

Northern Health Public Health continues to actively monitor and follow up all laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 among staff and patients at any NH facilities.

**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.

**Monday, May 3**

- 205 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 47 primary care provider appointments (24 primary care from Quesnel, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Vanderhoof, Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Terrace, Taylor, Kitimat, Chetwynd, Endako, and Calgary, and 23 COVID-19 related)

**Tuesday, May 4**

- 192 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 23 primary care provider appointments (14 primary care from Mackenzie, Kitimat, Dawson Creek, Rolla, Prince George, Hixon, High Level (AB), Terrace, Quesnel, Moberly Lake, and Smithers, and 9 COVID-19 related)

**Wednesday, May 5**

- 155 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 43 primary care provider appointments (29 primary care from Vanderhoof, Prince George, Dawson Creek, Smithers, Terrace, Fort St. John, Chetwynd, Thornhill, Quesnel, Spirit River, Taylor, and Kitimat, and 14 COVID-19 related)

**Thursday, May 6**

- 165 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 26 primary care provider appointments (22 primary care from Vanderhoof, Prince George, Houston, Quesnel, Port Moody, Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Terrace, Vancouver, Smithers, and Chetwynd, and 4 COVID-19 related)

**Friday, May 7**

- 144 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 30 primary care provider appointments (28 primary care from Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Fort St. John, Mackenzie, Prince George, Quesnel, Terrace, Quebec, Campbell River, Calgary, Bear Lake, and Smithers, and 2 COVID-19 related)

**Saturday, May 8**

- 75 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 28 primary care provider appointments (28 primary care from Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Campbell River, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, Thornhill, Telkwa, Houston, and Kitimat, and 0 COVID-19 related)

**Sunday, May 9**

- 101 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 16 primary care provider appointments (15 primary care from Prince George, Fort St. John, Vanderhoof, Prince Rupert, Prespatou, Fort Nelson, Thornhill, Terrace, and Kitimat, and 1 COVID-19 related)

**Monday, May 10**

- 184 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 31 primary care provider appointments (30 primary care from Fort St. John, Prespatou, Terrace, Dawson Creek, Prince George, Taylor, Smithers, Telkwa, Fort Nelson, Prince Rupert, Fort St. James, and Lax Kw'alaams, and 1 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****NH Overdose Prevention and Response: Regional Update and Northern Health Overdose Prevention Webpage**

As a response to the growing crisis in opioid overdose, and to keep our community partners and NH staff informed about the opioid epidemic, the NH Overdose Prevention and Response Team will commence with issuing quarterly OPR/Regional Updates. These updates will provide valuable information to determine where efforts and focus should be to support people with lived/living experiences with substance use and information about OPR services currently being offered.

Please visit [NH Overdose Prevention & Response](#) to access the OPR Regional Update for May 2021.

A newly updated [NH Overdose Prevention](#) webpage is now available! The webpage contains essential and up-to-date information for people who use drugs, their families, health care workers, and community partners regarding substance use, overdose recognition and response, harm reduction, and treatment services, and other related topics.

## Other organizational news

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### National Nursing Week message from Kelly Gunn, Chief Nursing Executive

“Dear Nurses,

The National Nursing Week annual celebrations take place from today through to Sunday to coincide with the week of Florence Nightingale’s birthday, May 12. The theme for National Nursing Week this year is **#WeAnswerTheCall**, and was developed by CNA to showcase the many roles that nurses play in the health-care journey of the people and families we serve. Since March of 2020, you have all ‘answered the call’, showing selflessness and courage to inform, support and care for people during the COVID-19 pandemic and all the fear and uncertainty that has come with it...”

Read the full letter on [OurNH](#).

For more information, read the statement from Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, [in recognition of National Nursing Week](#).

### Nursing week Resiliency ReBoot – Kick-off today! #weanswerthecall

We are excited to kick-off the *Resiliency ReBoot* tonight from 1800-1900 hours. Can you believe there is finally a conference that is taking shifts into consideration!

- *The Resilient Nurse* with Psychosocial Wellness Expert (& ReWired nurse) [Stephanie Staples](#)

**LEARNING TIP:** Have a notebook handy and a pen that you like – you will want to take notes for sure!

**COMMUNITY TIP:** Share your biggest takeaway on social with the hashtag #NursesReBoot and see what other nurses across North America are learning, too.

[Register](#) for this don’t-miss event now and view the [event times](#)! Another quick way to register is to scan the [QR code](#)! For more information on how to register, please see the [instructions](#).

Get ready for some fun on [Day 1](#). Check out the OurNH news feed for posts about the events all week!

[Straighten Your Cape tribute video](#) – share anytime!

### ITS adding [NH] suffix to your profile name

As part of the [Microsoft 365 \(M365\) deployment](#), ITS is adding the suffix [NH] to your NH profile name. This **will not** affect your username or functionality.

**Example:** *Lastname, Firstname [NH]*

NH is the first health authority to join [HealthBC](#), a shared M365 tenant for B.C. health authorities. Users from other B.C. health authorities will be identified by the same suffix label at the end of their profile name (i.e. [NH], [IH], [VI], [FH], and [VCH]).

As more health authorities join the [HealthBC](#) tenant, users will be able to easily connect, communicate, share, and collaborate with other health authorities.

**Note:** When digitally connecting with someone in [HealthBC](#), please pay attention to their profile name and which health authority they're a part of as some users may share the same name but work in different HAs.

### **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](#).