



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A weekly update for medical staff

June 15, 2021

Clinical guidelines

New NH Resource COVID-19 Community Toolkit (digital)

To empower local partners to share helpful information, we have created the [COVID-19 Community Toolkit](#), a digital resource for community partners with **3 key goals**:

- Get more people registered for their vaccine
- Highlight the community benefits of getting vaccinated
- Provide direction to *trusted* sources of information about vaccines and COVID-19

The toolkit includes:

- Links to factual sources of information.
- Digital images suitable for sharing on your website, social media platforms, email, or newsletter.
- Printable posters and infographics.

As trusted sources of information, community-based partners such as yourselves have a vital role to play in supporting public messaging, as people look for guidance and direction.

Our hope is that you, or your designated communications staff, will download and share these resources through your own internal communications channels, such as in a group email, on your website, through social media, in a digital newsletter, or printed and posted in your facility, supporting more Northern BC residents to get vaccinated.

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

Visit the new [COVID-19 surveillance dashboard](#) from the BCCDC, to see graphs, maps, and data showing COVID-19 case rates, test positivity and vaccination coverage by local health area (LHA) and community health service area (CHSA).

As of June 14, **7,767** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **78**
- New cases: **0**
- Currently in hospital: **2**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **2**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **154**

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](#) – June 14, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – June 9, 2021

Myocarditis and mRNA vaccines, information for clinicians

A “[dear doctor](#)” letter has been posted on the BCCDC web site in the adverse events following immunization ([AEFI](#)) tab of the [COVID-19 vaccination toolkit for health professionals](#), providing information about this potential association to mRNA vaccines and references to available information. Physicians who assess those who have recently received an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine presenting with signs and symptoms compatible with pericarditis and/ or myocarditis should report such events to their medical health officer, unless a clear alternate cause is established. The [AEFI reporting form](#) has been abbreviated and customized for COVID-19 vaccines to make it faster to complete, and it's available at the same “toolkit” location (AEFI tab).

Changes to Tocilizumab dosing strategies for critically ill COVID-19 patients

Due to stable drug supply, reduced usage and in order to align with the recommended provincial approach for treatment of critically ill COVID-19 patients, we will be changing from fixed dose approach for tocilizumab (i.e. 400 mg dose for all patients) back to the weight-based dosing (8 mg/kg max 800 mg) which was studied in the RECOVERY and REMAP-CAP trials and that demonstrated a reduction in mortality in this patient population. Please see memo from BC COVID Therapeutics Committee for more information.

Our order set has been updated and can be found on [OurNH](#) and [Physician COVID Resources](#).

Update on COVID-19 CCM: Transition to a single-point-of-care model and scale down

COVID-19 cases have decreased across the province and the north, with continued decreases expected in the summer months. In response, the Northern Health (NH) Case and Contact Management (CCM) Implementation Leadership Team has developed plans to

revise the way NH delivers CCM, which includes the transition to a single-point-of-care model and initiating a scale down of CCM teams.

Key changes:

- The current two-call model, which separates teams and functions into Case Initial Interview, Contact Tracing, and Contact Notification will be transitioned to a single-point-of-care model on **June 29, 2021**.
- CCM and PPH staff are being transitioned to other urgent organizational priorities, such as COVID immunizations, which will be an urgent priority for the summer and into the fall.
- The scale down of CCM teams has been initiated: most redeployed staff have already returned to their home units, reassignments are being planned and implemented, and the call centre is scaling down.
- **Note:** the CCM Implementation Leadership Team is also planning how to scale back up if case counts show signs of increase again.

We are grateful to all the team members who have supported CCM over the past year, and particularly over the past several months as NH responded to the surge in COVID-19 cases across the north. Thank you for everything you have contributed to CCM and NH's COVID-19 response.

More information

- An updated primary care provider FAQ document will be circulated
- See the [June 14 Memo](#)
- Further information about these changes will be shared at the June 17 CCM tailgate

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.

Tuesday, June 8

- 148 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 19 primary care provider appointments from Terrace, Prince George, Kitwanga, Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, and Chetwynd

Wednesday, June 9

- 120 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 24 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Terrace, Fort St. John, Baldonnel, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Thornhill, and Moberly Lake

Thursday, June 10

- 120 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 40 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Terrace, Prince George, Telkwa, Chilliwack (in Quesnel), Quesnel, Port Simpson, Chetwynd, Houston, Prince Rupert, Tumbler Ridge, Taylor

Friday, June 11

- 97 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 24 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Prince George, Thornhill, Houston, Fort St. John, Terrace, Kitimat, Chetwynd, Prince Rupert, Quesnel

Saturday, June 12

- 45 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 9 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Prince Rupert, Fort St. John, Prince George, Quesnel, Taylor, Terrace, Moberly Lake

Sunday, June 13

- 35 COVID-19 nursing assessments
- 8 primary care provider appointments from Prince George, Rollo, Smithers, Terrace, Dawson Creek

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

The take home naloxone milestone - More than 1 million naloxone shipped in BC since 2012

British Columbia health officials marked a grim milestone. More than one million kits containing the lifesaving medication naloxone, have been shipped to registered sites throughout the province since the inception of the Take Home Naloxone program in 2012.

There are more than 1,860 distribution sites throughout BC and a record 272,000 kits were shipped in 2020. According to the province, naloxone averted more than 3,000 deaths between January 2015 and March 2021.

Although naloxone has helped avert many deaths, those working in the field and people with lived and/or living experience of substance use emphasize that overdoses are preventable and naloxone is not enough. To highlight the perspectives of those who are experiencing this crisis in a very real way, people with lived/living experience have written letters to

explain why naloxone is not enough and point to other necessary and effective strategies such as safer alternatives to the toxic drug supply.

To read the letters from the heart of the crisis, please visit <https://towardtheheart.com> and to learn more about the take home naloxone milestone, please visit <http://www.bccdc.ca>

Other organizational news

Refresh of the phone system and numbers at multiple Prince George between June 24-June 27

Update your phone lists! Staff at the following Prince George sites are receiving new numbers. [Check out the new numbers here.](#)

If you have a Cisco phone you can now use their six-digit local.

Location	Start date	Start time
Parkwood IPT 5	June 24th	8 AM
Victoria Medical X-Ray	June 24th	12 PM
Laurier Manor	June 24th	2 PM
IRIS House	June 25th	8 AM
Phoenix Lab	June 25th	12 PM
Nechako	June 25th	2 PM
Gateway	June 26th	8 AM
Rainbow	June 27th	8 AM
Parkside	June 27th	1 PM

Note that the above table lists the date and start time of this upgrade for each location listed. Depending on the size of the location, this upgrade could take several hours.

Lower-Risk Nicotine Use Guidelines (LRNUG)

Funded by Health Canada's Substance Use and Addictions Program, the LRNUG project has developed several resources to help guide people who use, or are thinking about using nicotine, on how to lower the risk associated with these products.

Example: commercial tobacco, other nicotine products, including e-cigarettes.

- Recommendations (comprehensive document outlines the recommendations, summary statements, and considerations around lower-risk nicotine use)
- Quick Tips (patient-facing advice on lowering risk when using nicotine products)
- Evidence Brief (HCP facing, easily digestible, contextualized recommendations document)

Visit the CAMH website to view, print, and share these resources: [Lower-Risk Nicotine Use Guidelines \(LRNUG\)](#)

The latest update on the Health Career Access Program!

The new [Health Career Access Program \(HCAP\)](#) gives you the opportunity to receive paid education and on-the-job training to become a registered [Health Care Assistant](#).

Overview:

- Total seats to fill: 215
- All 215 positions have been posted on the Northern Health Career site
- Seats filled: 188
- We currently have had three successful cohorts begin the program

First Cohort: Started January 4, 2021

- Prince George and Vanderhoof seats
- Ten seats filled for Prince George (Parkside, Gateway Assisted Living, Gateway Complex Care and Jubilee Lodge)
- Three seats filled for Stuart Nechako Manor
- The group consists of eight internal applicants, five external applicants

Second Cohort: Started March 1, 2021

- Dawson Creek, Fort St. John and Chetwynd seats
- Four out of seven seats were filled in Dawson Creek
- Seven out of eight seats were filled in Fort St. John
- One of one seat was filled in Chetwynd
- The group consisted of two internal applicants, 10 external applicants

Third Cohort: Started April 26, 2021

- Eight of eight seats filled for Terrace
- Four of eight seats filled for Smithers
- Four of eight seats filled for Prince Rupert
- Two seats filled for Hazelton (part of Smithers cohort)
- Two seats filled for Haida Gwaii (Part of Prince Rupert Cohort)

Fourth Cohort: Starts July 1, 2021

- Eight of eight seats will be filled in Terrace
- Eight of eight seats will be filled in Kitimat
- Eight of eight seats will be filled in Smithers

We would like to send a thank you out to all the long-term care managers and staff who have been instrumental in getting this program started. Our current progress is due in a large part to your ongoing support.

If you have any questions about the program please email HCAP@northernhealth.ca.

[For more information on the HCAP, internal application process and resources for managers.](#)

Magnetic Resonance Imaging Appropriateness

Following the directions outlined in the British Columbia Medical Imaging Provincial Strategy, the Northern Health Medical Imaging Regional Team has been working with the provincial group and Northern Health radiologists over the past year to produce guidelines for reducing inappropriate ordering of MRI.

Simultaneously a Musculoskeletal (MSK) MRI Appropriateness Working Group (Facility Engagement) – comprising representation from Primary Care physicians, Orthopedic Surgeons, Internists and Radiologists – had been meeting over the past year to produce guidelines for reducing inappropriate ordering of MSK MRI studies.

For comprehensive information about these processes and phases, please visit the [Northern Health Physicians news site](#).

Feelings First: Provincial campaign to raise awareness of social emotional development in the early years

Northern Health is excited to be part of the BC Healthy Child Development Alliance [Feelings First](#) campaign. On May 17, 2021, this 13-week social media campaign launched to spread awareness and spark conversation around Social and Emotional Development (SED) in the early years.

The goal of this campaign is to develop and distribute engaging messages that will build awareness about SED and of its importance to early child development.

This campaign is for:

- **Parents and caregivers** – to support British Columbians who care for children aged 0-5 years in learning about and implementing SED into their daily lives
- **Early years providers** – to supply learning tools and a standardized framework for further education on the topic of SED in the early years to share among their families and colleagues
- **Public at large** – to encourage everyone to consider the role of SED in the early years, in an effort to draw greater attention to this topic in our society

Want to get involved? Follow the campaign and share with your friends, family, and network:

- [Feelings First website](#)
- [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) @feelingsfirst.ca
- Facebook: [Feelings First](#)
- Have questions? Email info@feelingsfirst.ca

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](#).