



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A weekly update for medical staff

October 19, 2021

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Clinical guidelines

COVID-19 testing schedule and turnaround times

Laboratory services respectfully request that clinical staff avoid phoning the laboratory to check the status of COVID-19 tests or to inquire about results. Results will be available in PowerChart/MOIS when testing is complete.

For more information, please see the memo linked in the digest email.

COVID-19 news and updates

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 October 18, **13,953** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **880**
- New cases: **64**
- Currently in hospital: **74**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **21**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **193**

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.

- [BC COVID-19 pandemic update](#) – October 18, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – October 13, 2021

Reminder: Mandatory vaccination for all BC health care workers

On September 13, 2021, Provincial Health Officer (PHO) Dr. Bonnie Henry announced that all health-care workers will need to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Further to this, the PHO order on mandatory vaccination will include **all** staff and physicians employed by BC health authorities, as well as all students, researchers, fee-for-service/contract physicians, and all individuals and contractors who work, study or volunteer at our sites.

The order will come into effect on **October 26, 2021**. For more information, please refer to the memo in the emailed digest.

Find a COVID-19 vaccine clinic in your area!

Looking to get your COVID-19 vaccine?

Visit the [Northern Health website](#) where you can find the most up-to-date clinics available in your community.

COVID-19 cases and contact management update

Northern Health is currently experiencing a surge in COVID-19 cases across the region, which is putting pressure on health care to respond. Northern Health thanks our public health case and contact management staff for their work and asks for patience and respect as we work through this challenging time.

More information is available in the [Primary Care Provider FAQ document](#).

Town hall for medical staff regarding COVID-19

In September and early October, there will be a number of Town Hall information sessions available for medical staff to get the latest information and ask questions about the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. For each session, Northern Health's leaders Dr. Jong Kim, the Chief Medical Health Officer, and Tanis Hampe, the new VP of Public Health, will give a brief presentation, then provide an opportunity for medical staff to ask questions or provide comments.

For more information, including topics included in each presentation and how to join the (virtual) meetings, please click into the schedule of events:

- [October 21 \(5-6 pm\)](#)
- [October 25 \(5-6 pm\)](#)

These town halls will be recorded. Please contact physican.education@northernhealth.ca for access to the latest town hall recording.

Trusted links and resources for COVID-19

- On the NH physician website:
 - [COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- OurNH resources:
 - [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#)
 - [Pandemic Recovery Toolkit](#)
- [Northern Health online booking form – COVID-19 test](#)
- [Northern BC community immunization coverage page](#)
- [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 Virtual Primary and Community Care Clinic: **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

Not Just Naloxone: Registration for fall workshops now open

The online registration form for the regional **Not Just Naloxone** workshop is now open for fall/winter 2021/2022.

Not Just Naloxone (NJNI) is a virtual workshop hosted by the First Nations Health Authority and is delivered by the Four Directions Team. This training was developed in response to the toxic drug crisis in BC, which continues to disproportionately impact Indigenous people.

Training Dates in the North: November 4 - 5, 2021

For more information please email Sony Subedi at njn@fnha.ca

Please visit the [Not Just Naloxone site](#) to register for this workshop.

Other organizational news

Influenza Prevention Program 2021/22 - peer immunizers needed!

Peer Immunizers are RNs, RPNs, LPNs or pharmacists who have volunteered to provide influenza immunization to peers and unit/site employees while working their regular scheduled shifts. This gives employees timely access to influenza immunization.

If you are interested in this role, please email: influenza@northernhealth.ca

Prevent influenza, mask or immunize. Report your choice; it's your duty to care.

Have you had your flu shot, or decided you won't get one this year? Don't forget to let us know.

Physicians and staff can visit flu.healthcarebc.ca to report your choice (by December 1, 2021).

More questions or information, check out the flu page on OurNH, read the memo on the physician website, or email us at influenza@northernhealth.ca.

Flu season is quickly approaching

Getting the influenza vaccination is more important than ever this year, especially with a health authority already experiencing a COVID-19 surge.

With more people returning to the workplace, children back in school and changes to public health mandates, it is expected to see an increase of influenza cases this year compared to last year.

Peak influenza season is from December to February, and it takes a minimum of two weeks for antibodies against the flu to develop fully following vaccination. Northern Health will start offering influenza vaccine to health care workers October 18, 2021. For more information about flu vaccination, please see:

- [Northern Health influenza information](#)
- [OurNH influenza information](#)
- [BCCDC influenza information](#)
- [CDC influenza information for health professionals](#)

For information about the flu vaccine clinics being offered in the region, please see the [Northern Health flu information site](#), and the [ImmunizeBC Find an Influenza \(Flu\) Clinic site](#).

MOIS 2.27 release coming in November

Changes are coming to MOIS as we upgrade to the MOIS/CMOIS 2.27 release. A special thank you to Haida Gwaii for working with us on the MOIS pre-release, which allows us to run the MOIS new release at a site to evaluate any changes needed before releasing to all sites and services.

New dates and times of note:

- Fri, Nov 5 – Go/No-go decision on early adopters go-live
- Sat, Nov 6 – Early adopter period starts
- Fri, Nov 19 at noon – Go/No-go decision for full MOIS/CMOIS release
- Fri, Nov 19 at 10pm – All MOIS sites go down for upgrade
- Fri, Nov 19 at 10:30pm – CMOIS goes down for upgrade
- Sat, Nov 20 at 10 am – CMOIS are available for use
- Sat, Nov 20 at noon – All other MOIS instances are available for use.

*Alerts will be sent when the systems are being brought down and when they are brought back up.

*For affected sites/services please follow the [standard downtime procedures](#).

The [MOIS 2.27 Release Learning Hub course](#) is completed and live on the Learning Hub.

For more information, review the the memo in the emailed digest.

Antimicrobial Stewardship Reminder - Learn more about the Required Organizational Practice!

Required Organizational Practices (ROPs) are evidence-informed practices addressing high-priority areas that are essential and that the organization must have in place to enhance patient safety and minimize risk.

Participation and achievement of national standards of care gives reassurance to the public, patients and families, caregivers and the entire organization that Northern Health is providing high-quality services.

Bacterial resistance and adverse effects from antimicrobial agents (e.g. antibiotics, antifungals, antivirals) are growing concerns in the general public and health care systems nation-wide. We are losing our antimicrobials to multi-drug resistant bugs. Incorporating antimicrobial stewardship principles into our daily patient care practices are essential to safeguard our population.

Northern Health is working to minimize unnecessary or excessive antimicrobial exposure. The goals of the AMS program are to:

- Successfully treat infections
- Reduce inappropriate antimicrobial use (evidenced informed prescribing practices)
- Minimize toxicities and adverse events (like C. difficile infection)
- Limit selection of antimicrobial resistant strains

[Antimicrobial Stewardship Poster](#) (OurNH link)

For more information on all ROPS see the [ROP Handbook](#)

If you have any questions, please email Alicia.Rahier@northernhealth.ca.

NEW Long-term Care/Assisted Living Digest – Issue 31: Information for residents and families

The long-term care task group is producing updates once a month for residents and families of long-term care homes and assisted living facilities.

[Issue 31](#) of the long-term care and assisted living digest is now available. This issue provides updated information on vaccine requirements for visitors in long-term care and assisted living.

COVID-19 Virtual Clinic data

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, October 11

- 123 nursing assessments
- 21 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Kitwanga, Prince Rupert, Dawson Creek, Fort St. James, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Telkwa, Hazelton, and Prince George

Tuesday, October 12

- 210 nursing assessments
- 46 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Arras, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Mackenzie, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Houston, Hudson's Hope, Kitwanga, Moberly Lake, Pouce Coupe, Smithers, Thornhill, and Kitwanga

Wednesday, October 13

- 146 nursing assessments
- 56 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Fraser, Fort St. John, Kitimat, Mackenzie, Metlakatla, Prespatou, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Terrace, Thornhill, Burns Lake, Houston, Kitwanga, Moberly Lake, Red Deer (AB), and Fort St. James

Thursday, October 14

- 194 nursing assessments
- 55 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Taylor, Terrace, Charlie Lake, Houston, Kitimat, Moberley Lake, and Hazelton

Friday, October 15

- 140 nursing assessments
- 40 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Hazelton, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Telkwa, Terrace, Thornhill, Tomslake, Caplan (QC), Mackenzie, Burns Lake, and Granisle

Saturday, October 16

- 100 nursing assessments
- 28 primary care provider appointments from Buick, Dawson Creek, Fort St. James, Fort St. John, Fraser Lake, Penticton, Prince George, Quesnel, Terrace, Chetwynd, Mackenzie, Prince Rupert, Fort St. John, Golden, Fort Smith (NWT), Smithers, and Thornhill

Sunday, October 17

- 95 nursing assessments

- 20 primary care provider appointments from Smithers, Fort Nelson, Moberly Lake, Vanderhoof, Fort St. John, Prince George, Dawson Creek, Canmore (AB), Prince Rupert, Chetwynd, Terrace, and Quesnel

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](#).