



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A weekly update for medical staff*

**November 23, 2021**

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## **Clinical guidelines**

### **Joint statement on Health Canada approval of COVID-19 pediatric vaccine**

“British Columbia welcomes the news that Health Canada has approved Pfizer’s COVID-19 pediatric vaccine for children aged five to 11. The rigorous review confirms that this first vaccine formulated for younger children is safe and effective. We also welcome the recommendations from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization on use of this new lower-dose vaccine to provide protection to children from five to 11 years of age. We look forward to making the pediatric vaccine available for 360,000 young British Columbians as soon as possible.”

To continue reading this statement and for more information, please visit the [BC Government website](#).

## **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 November 22, **17,189** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **528**
- New cases: **75**
- Currently in hospital: **48**

- Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **18**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **245**

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](#) – November 22, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – November 17, 2021

## **COVID-19 boosters – All staff and medical staff are asked to register and identify their category**

Dr. Henry announced a booster program for BC in late October. People will be invited to receive a booster dose when they are eligible.

Groups that are currently receiving booster invitations are:

- Age 70 and older
- Indigenous peoples age 18 and older
- Individuals who received their second dose on or before March 15
- Individuals who received two doses of Astrazeneca/Covishield

The recommended interval for a booster dose is 6-8 months after dose 2; however in order to smooth out the demand for community COVID-19 clinics, people may receive an invitation as early as 5 months.

**While a booster dose is not mandatory, healthcare workers in specific settings will be a priority for a booster.**

**All staff and medical staff are being asked to register and to self-identify in one of five categories** by [following this link](#) and entering a population access code ([refer to this memo for the code](#) – OurNH link). Even if you have already received a third dose or booster, please go onto the system and select your category. The system will recognize you and you will not receive another invitation for a booster, but this allows the province to track the booster uptake by people working in the health system at an aggregate level.

For instructions, the link, and the code please refer to the [November 18 memo to all staff and medical staff](#) (OurNH link).

## **Gown use during the precautionary period for baricitinib for patients with COVID-19**

The type of gown that you need to wear during the precautionary period for baricitinib for patients with COVID-19 varies depending on the care activity.

- For any patient care or task with a risk of contact to blood or body fluids, wear a disposable Chemo-approved gown.

- For routine patient care or tasks with no risk of contact with body fluids, such as a blood pressure check, handling food trays, or speaking with a patient, wear a reusable or disposable Isolation gown.
- If wearing a reusable isolation gown and there is no contact with blood or body fluids, the gown can be placed in the regular laundry bin once doffed. The gowns do not need to be identified with the antineoplastic/cytotoxic label.
- If the reusable isolation gown does come in contact with blood or body fluids, then follow your facility's protocol for placing in a designated laundry bag with the antineoplastic/cytotoxic label.
- Disposable chemotherapy gowns are discarded in the cytotoxic waste container once doffed.

Do not wear an isolation gown over top of a chemo-approved gown.

### 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

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#### Delivery barriers for take home naloxone and harm reduction supplies

Due to the emergency events across BC, BCCDC is experiencing delivery barriers to the northern region for take home naloxone (THN) and harm reduction supplies. We are encouraging sites to monitor stock and source naloxone and HR supplies locally from neighbouring community locations wherever possible.

If your site is critically low please reach out to [Reanne Sanford](#) or [Kristen Jensen](#). More information to come as it is available.

A bulk order of naloxone will be sent to the northern region (Prince George) for dispersal to other northern communities as needed. Standing orders have been paused for NH sites.

BCCDC will share out communication to THN sites in regards to shipping delays and plans to coordinate alternate shipping methods. BCCDC will be assessing incoming additional requests on a case by case basis. Our team will provide updates when they are made available.

### **BC Centre on Substance Use - Webinar series: opioid use disorder care in ED settings**

A six-part, interactive and case-based webinar series, led by emergency care providers for emergency care providers, has been launched to support the initiative aimed to improve the experience of opioid use disorder care for people and providers. Register for upcoming webinars or view previous sessions here:

- [November 25, 5:00 - 6:00pm: Buprenorphine/naloxone in the ED \(webinar\)](#)

## **Other organizational news**

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### **Clearing the Smoke – BC Lung Foundation Wood Smoke Webinar December 1**

Residential wood smoke impacts many of our Northern communities during the winter months. This smoke can linger at ground level and worsen a variety of health conditions. The BC Lung Foundation invites you to a webinar to learn about the science of wood smoke, how it impacts health and how to reduce exposure.

If you're interested in attending, you can register on the [2021 Wood Smoke Webinar Registration site](#).

### **YOCON UTM Viral Collection Swab Expiration Date Extension**

Health Canada has approved the extension of expiry date of YOCON UTM viral collection swabs to 24 months beyond date of manufacture.

For more information, please see the full memo attached to the email digest.

### **Important Lab Update to H. pylori Testing**

#### **Background:**

Helicobacter pylori Breath Test has been unavailable due to COVID-19 and the potential of aerosol creation during collection.

#### **New information:**

LifeLabs has stated that the Helicobacter pylori Stool Antigen test is of comparable specificity and sensitivity to the Helicobacter pylori Breath Test for the detection of active *Helicobacter pylori* infections. The recommendation to discontinue the Helicobacter pylori Breath Test and permanently replace it with the Helicobacter pylori Stool Antigen Test has been approved.

For more information, please see the full memo attached to the email digest.

## Putting Patients First – Registration now open for this hybrid model conference, and abstract submission deadline posted

British Columbia's only patient-oriented research conference is coming back in a hybrid model (both in-person and virtual) for 2022! [BC SUPPORT Unit's](#) fifth annual provincial conference, [Putting Patients First 2022: Listening, Learning, Collaborating and Changing](#) (social media hashtag: #PPF22), will be held at the [Vancouver Marriott Pinnacle Downtown](#) on March 10 and 11, 2022.

As part of the conference we are excited to welcome keynote speakers [Mr. Fred Cameron](#) and [Dr. Tammy Clifford](#). Join us as we learn together, celebrate accomplishments, forge new relationships, and prepare to tackle new challenges ahead.

### Registration:

Registration is free and now open. [Register Today!](#) *\*Please note there is limited space available for in-person registration\**

### Call for Abstracts:

[Call for Abstract details](#) are now available; all abstracts are due by December 10, 2022.

Stay tuned to our [website](#) for program updates and announcements.

We look forward to having you join us!

## Falls Prevention Reminder - Learn more about the required organizational practice and the new clinical practice standard

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.

Falls are a leading cause of injury. All individuals are at risk for falls, especially those in need of health care services. Reducing injuries from falls can increase quality of life for clients and reduce costs.

Northern Health uses individualized screens/tools to assess risk, document, and coordinate interventions to prevent falls and minimize injury from falls. We use universal falls prevention precautions in ALL service areas.

The “northern way of caring” is to assess each client’s risk for falls and implement interventions to prevent falls and harm from falls.

For more information about fall protection, please see the [Falls Prevention Poster](#) (OurNH link). For more information on all ROPS see the [ROP Handbook](#). If you have any questions, please email [Tysen.Leblood@northernhealth.ca](mailto:Tysen.Leblood@northernhealth.ca).

## Updates to timelines for MOIS 2.27 release

Due to the complexity of this upgrade, the site MOIS upgrades will need to start before the CMOIS upgrade. The upgrades for all MOIS instances, except CMOIS, will start at 8:00pm on Fri, Nov 26. The CMOIS upgrade will still occur at 10:30pm on Fri, Nov 26. **Dates and times of note:**

- **Fri, Nov 26** at noon – Go/No-go decision for full MOIS/CMOIS release
- **Fri, Nov 26** at 8pm – All MOIS sites go down for upgrade
- **Fri, Nov 26** at 10:30pm – CMOIS goes down for upgrade
- **Sat, Nov 27** at noon – MOIS/CMOIS are available for use

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

## Reminder - Registration is open for the 2021 Northern BC Research and Quality Conference! December 7-9, 2021.

The Northern BC Research and Quality Conference is a forum enhanced with resources and skill development workshops to share health and health services research, evaluation, evidence-based practice and quality improvement initiatives in the North.

Join in workshops, presentations, and discussions about these timely themes in health care:

- Innovations
- Equity
- Cultural Safety
- Health and Wellness
- Sustainable Systems

Connect virtually with other health care providers, researchers, quality improvement experts, students, and people seeking health care services.

### Key Note Speaker:

[Dr. Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond](#),

Senior Associate Counsel, Woodward and Company

### Plenary Speakers:

[Dr. Danielle Lavallee](#),

Scientific Director for the Michael Smith Health Research BC

Shirley Wong,

Executive Project Manager, Strategic Data Initiatives at the Ministry of Health

### Conference Highlights:

- Patient Partner engagement
- 36 oral presentations
- Five rapid fire presentations
- Over 40 posters
- Door prizes and prizes throughout the event

- Connect and network with Quality and Research colleagues across the North

This is a free virtual event open to everyone, but registration is required. [Please register here](#).

Feel free to join the sessions that appeal to you. Your attendance is not required for the whole event. For more information, please see the [conference poster](#) (OurNH link).

## **Type 2 Diabetes Dialogue: Emerging innovations in Diabetes**

Join us for two half-day virtual dialogue sessions on November 24 and 25, 2021! Check out [the full agenda](#) and be a part of the #Type2DiabetesBC and #DiabetesDialogue conversation. This event includes type 2 diabetes experts and thought leaders representing primary and secondary clinical delivery, community services, population health, patients, researchers and policy makers.

Visit the BC Patient Safety and Quality Council website to [register now!](#)

In addition, the BC Patient Safety and Quality Council has extended the deadline for our [Quality Forum Health Talks Student Contest](#), which is a call to all students in BC to share their hopes for health care. Your support in sharing the contest with students would be appreciated!

## **COVID-19 Virtual Clinic data**

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### **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, November 15**

- 134 nursing assessments
- 35 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Fort St John, Dawson Creek, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Chetwynd, Quesnel, Terrace, and Dodsland SK

#### **Tuesday, November 16**

- 86 nursing assessments
- 43 primary care provider appointments from Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Houston, Kitimat, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Hazelton, Fort Nelson, Fort St John, Endako, and Thornhill

#### **Wednesday, November 17**

- 94 nursing assessments
- 49 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Houston, Mackenzie, Prince George, Terrace, Fort St John, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Thornhill, and Smithers

**Thursday, November 18**

- 100 nursing assessments
- 44 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Kitimat, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Thornhill, Houston, Smithers, Quesnel, Moberly Lake, and Anahim Lake

**Friday, November 19**

- 91 nursing assessments
- 53 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Fort St John, Houston, Kitimat, Prince George, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Anahim Lake, Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Thornhill, Prince Rupert, Rolla, Williams Lake, Sik-E-Dakh, and Telkwa

**Saturday, November 20**

- 49 nursing assessments
- 28 primary care provider appointments from Charlie Lake, Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Fort St John, Kitwanga, Prince George, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Tumbler Ridge, and Thornhill

**Sunday, November 21**

- 54 nursing assessments
- 28 primary care provider appointments from Fort St John, Hudson's Hope, Mackenzie, Prince George, Prophet River, Quesnel, Smithers, Taylor, Terrace, Chetwynd, Kitimat, and Burns Lake

**Wellness and more**

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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](#).