



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A weekly update for medical staff*

**December 21, 2021**

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## **Clinical guidelines**

### **Updates to isolation requirements for fully vaccinated COVID-19 cases – December 15, 2021**

The [Interim Guidance: Public Health Management of Cases and Contacts Associated with Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the Community](#) (BCCDC) was updated on December 15, 2021. The [Primary Care Provider FAQ](#) will be updated in the New Year.

**Key update:** isolation requirements for cases on page 16 (which can be viewed on [this memo](#)):

- Generally, fully immunized individuals can cease isolation after seven days. Unimmunized or partially immunized individuals can cease isolation after ten days. Additional criteria and details in [this memo](#).

Please also see [this information from the BCCDC](#).

## **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 December 20, **18,285** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **236**
- New cases: **22**

- Currently in hospital: **9**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **6**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **271**

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](#) – December 20, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – December 15, 2021

## **COVID-19 Boosters – All Staff and Medical Staff are asked to Register and Identify their Category**

**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).

This action will ensure that you are registered and that you will receive an invitation for a booster dose (at least 6 months after your second dose).

Once you receive your invitation, you can [access a clinic in your community](#) or book an appointment at a local pharmacy that is offering COVID-19 immunizations.

Even if you have already received a third dose or booster, please go in 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).

## **REGEN-COV: Monoclonal antibody regimen for COVID-19 inpatients**

REGEN-COV (casirivimab + imdevimab) is a combination of two monoclonal antibodies that has been evaluated in various settings for management of COVID-19. The greatest benefit was seen in seronegative, moderate to severely ill inpatients (RECOVERY trial) when administered within 10 days of symptom onset. The benefits included a number needed to treat of 17 to prevent one death, as well as a reduction in risk of progressing to requiring mechanical ventilation and shorter length of hospital stay.

Seronegative status (negative for COVID-19 spike antibodies) must be confirmed by BC CDC lab prior to patients receiving the dose. The NH Therapeutics Committee has developed an [order set](#) and the BC COVID Therapeutics Committee has created a [clinical practice guide](#) to facilitate REGEN-COV prescribing. The regional order set provides clinicians with inclusion and exclusion criteria as well as the procedure for serology testing. An NH [parenteral drug administration manual](#) monograph has also been developed to aid with administration.

NH pharmacy has a small supply of doses available at UHNBC, MMH, FSJH, and DCDH. Doses can be re-distributed to other sites within each HSDA as needed.

See full memo (in emailed digest) for more information.

### **Emergency response during outbreaks**

Unexpected events such as fire, flooding, or evacuation can happen at any time; even during a declared outbreak. When these events happen, the immediate safety of staff, residents, and patients takes priority over infection control protocols.

If you need to evacuate an area, follow your site code procedure to get everyone to safety and then you can look at what PPE (e.g. face shields) is needed. Outbreak protocols are being updated to reflect this information.

### **Updated document: Essential Public Health Services during COVID-19 response**

First published in June 2020, [this document](#) (OurNH link) provides guidance for the delivery of essential public health services during the COVID-19 response. This version mainly updates and adds resources listed. As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, next versions and/or documents will be released to support the transition to a post pandemic state.

Updates include:

- New items in “Additional Resources”
- Addition of a one-page overview of services and functions
- Additional function added to:
  - Immunizations and Adverse Events
  - Healthy Schools and Youth
- Updated resources in the following sections:
- Early Childhood Development and Family Services
- Healthy Schools and Youth
- Postpartum and Newborn Services
- Prenatal Services

### **Updated COVID-19 Unit Discharge Checklist**

This [updated COVID-19 Unit Discharge Checklist](#) (ourNH link) provides steps for discharging COVID-19 patients from hospital. Northern Health public health automatically receives a report of discharged COVID-19 patients and will contact patients regarding self-isolation requirements after discharge. Units do not need to notify public health/CD Hub of COVID-19 patient discharges.

### **Building respectful relationships in COVID times – New video resource**

Indigenous Health, Northern Health (NH) and the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH) present a new video called Building Respectful Relationships in COVID Times.

This video is intended to encourage vaccination uptake and show that the vaccination clinic space is designed to be safe and inclusive for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

To read more about this resource and watch the video, please visit the [Northern Health Stories site](#).

## 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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### Stop the Stigma Campaign

The Province of British Columbia recently released a provincial anti-stigma campaign titled “Stop The Stigma”.

People who use substances deserve compassion and support, and so do their families. Make the connection, have the conversation, and stop the stigma.

To learn more, please visit the [stop the stigma website](#), and watch the [campaign video](#).

## Other organizational news

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### Electrocardiogram (ECG)/Holter Monitor Survey

Attention all professions that perform electrocardiograms (ECGs) and/or Holter Monitors. Please complete this [short, voluntary, and anonymous survey](#) to help identify and plan for ongoing education as well as policy development.

Please note: the deadline to complete this survey is February 1, 2022 and is designed only for professions who perform ECGs and/or Holter Monitors.

## Get the latest updates on the Strategic Analytics Team - view their December newsletter

This newsletter promotes awareness and knowledge sharing about the work being done within the Strategic Analytics Team: [view the December Strategic Analytics newsletter](#)

If you have any questions or have a project in mind that requires strategic analysis, contact [StrategicAnalytics@northernhealth.ca](mailto:StrategicAnalytics@northernhealth.ca).

## Update - New Privacy Impact Assessment templates coming Spring 2022!

On November 25 2021, amendments to BC's [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) received royal assent.

The Northern Health (NH) Privacy Office has reviewed the amendments and confirm that further update to NH's 2021 privacy impact assessment (PIA) templates is required.

These updated PIA templates are expected in early Spring 2022. Launch of the 2022 templates will include Privacy Office workshops, scheduled via PHSA LearningHUB.

The Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) template is a tool used to ensure compliance with BC privacy law and to identify any data protection issues or privacy risks before a system, project, program or activity is put in motion (all PIAs should be done in the early development stages of a new program or initiative).

The department initiating/sponsoring a new or updated service is responsible to complete a PIA and submit it to the Privacy Office for review.

The 2022 PIA templates will help to:

- Align stakeholder expectations.
- Reduce the number of clarifications requested after a PIA has been submitted.
- Better inform role expectations.
- Streamline authoring and privacy compliance/risk review.
- Increase clarity on the information being requested in the PIA.
- Simplify work required to document changes.

The 2022 PIA templates include:

- An outline of the overall PIA process.
- Increased guidance to PIA authors.
- Improved definition of roles and related expectations.
- More consistent format across all templates.
- Updated guidance questions.

PIA templates are always available on the [Privacy Office OurNH page](#) (OurNH link) under **Forms**.

If you have any questions, you may contact [privacy@northernhealth.ca](mailto:privacy@northernhealth.ca).

## Town hall meetings for medical staff

Northern Health have been offering town hall meetings to share information about the COVID-19 pandemic, recruitment and retention strategies, to get feedback on upcoming plans and projects, and more!

The first town hall of 2022 will be on Tuesday January 11 (from 5-6 pm). Dr. Jong Kim and Tanis Hampe will give a brief presentation about post pandemic planning and update meeting. After the presentation, there will be time for questions and comments.

For more information about upcoming town hall and education events, including topics for each presentation and how to join the (virtual) meetings, please click into the schedule of events:

- [January 11](#): Post pandemic planning
- [January 17](#): Feedback & Input Request: NH Medical Advisory Cultural Safety and Humility Draft Plan
- [January 25](#): Feedback & Input Request: NH Medical Advisory Cultural Safety and Humility Draft Plan

Dates and information for these events will be posted to the [Continuing Medical Education](#) site.

These town halls will be recorded. Please contact [physician.education@northernhealth.ca](mailto:physician.education@northernhealth.ca) for access to the latest town hall recording.

## Seeking feedback on the NHMAC Cultural Safety Action Plan

Northern Health's work regarding cultural safety and humility focuses on ensuring equity and a system free from stigma, discrimination, and racism for medical staff, employees and those people we serve. In light of the recent attention on systemic racism in the health care system, the Northern Health Medical Advisory Committee (NHMAC) has committed to dedicated leadership and efforts to facilitate this transformation, particularly where it pertains to medical staff.

Please join Northern Health's leadership, including the Northern Health Medical Advisory Committee Chair Dr. Helene Smith, the VP of Indigenous Health Dr. Margo Greenwood, and Dr. Becky Temple, Medical Director, to provide feedback and input into the draft Action Plan. This will be a CME accredited event where leaders will present their initial thoughts on the direction we need to take and provide the opportunity for medical staff to reflect, discuss and provide input into the draft Action Plan.

This presentation and discussion will be January 17, 2022 (from 5-6pm) and available on [Zoom](#). For more information, including the link to the Zoom meeting, please see the [CME website](#).

## Call for proposals for Mills Memorial Hospital Replacement project logo!

PCL Construction, with the help of Northern Health and the Skeena Salmon Arts Fest Society, is seeking proposals from artists to create a logo for the Mills Memorial Hospital Redevelopment project in Terrace.

The project is seeking Northwest Coast form line style drawing, created by an artist of Indigenous heritage who resides in Northern Health's Northwest services area.

Download the [call for proposals](#) for info about submission requirements, eligibility, pricing, and more.

Deadline to submit: Wednesday, January 5, 2022

Submit proposals and any questions to: [skeenasalmonartfest@gmail.com](mailto:skeenasalmonartfest@gmail.com)

Spread the word! Tell your artist friends.

For more information about the Mills Memorial project, visit the [Northern Health Let's Talk site](#).

## 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, December 13

- 98 nursing assessments
- 51 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Houston, Kitimat, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Fort St John, Chetwynd, Peace River Regional District, Tumbler Ridge, Thornhill, and Charlie Lake

#### Tuesday, December 14

- 76 nursing assessments
- 59 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Pouce Coupe, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Tumbler Ridge, Massett, Quesnel, Thornhill, and Smithers

#### Wednesday, December 15

- 81 nursing assessments
- 48 primary care provider appointments from Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Hudson's Hope, Kitimat, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Thornhill, and Quesnel

#### Thursday, December 16

- 65 nursing assessments
- 48 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, Houston, Kitimat, Prince George, Smithers, Thornhill, Charlie Lake, and Fort St John

#### Friday, December 17

- 61 nursing assessments

- 51 primary care provider appointments from Cecil Lake, Dawson Creek, Hudson's Hope, Nazko, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Terrace, Thornhill, Fort St John, Moberley Lake, Quesnel, Chetwynd, and Telkwa

**Saturday, December 18**

- 60 nursing assessments
- 33 primary care provider appointments from Buick, Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Houston, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Terrace, Thornhill, Topley, Tumbler Ridge, Dawson Creek, and Fort St John

**Sunday, December 19**

- 57 nursing assessments
- 29 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Kitimat, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Skidegate, Telkwa, Terrace, Thornhill, Vanderhoof, Houston, and Taylor

**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](#).