



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A weekly update for medical staff

January 4, 2022

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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 31*, **19,028** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **494**
- New cases: **129**
- Currently in hospital: **16**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **6**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **275**

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.

*374 new cases reported on the [BC Pandemic Report](#) from January 3 (more information coming January 5, please connect with the [BC Ministry of Health newsfeed](#) and [BC COVID-19 Dashboard](#) for up to date, detailed information).

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](#) – January 3, 2022
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – December 22, 2021

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

National data on the overdose crisis in Canada

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), on behalf of the federal, provincial and territorial Special Advisory Committee on the Epidemic of Opioid Overdoses, released the latest national data on opioid- and stimulant-related harms that continue to demonstrate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the overdose crisis in Canada.

Key findings from the national data include:

- Pandemic factors (e.g., limited availability or accessibility of services, increased stress and isolation, increasingly toxic drug supply) contributed to worsening overdose crisis
- Majority of overdose deaths were observed in BC, Alberta, and Ontario
- Middle-aged men continue to be most impacted by the drug toxicity crisis
- Fentanyl and its analogues continue to be major drivers of the crisis.
- Read the full report [here](#).

The data release is accompanied by:

- Brief [report](#) on neonatal abstinence syndrome in Canada
- Update to the [simulation model](#) that predicts the number of opioid-related deaths that may occur in future
- [Joint statement](#) from the Special Advisory Committee co-chairs
- [Statement](#) from the new Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
- Learn more about the actions taken by the Government of Canada to address the overdose crisis [here](#).

Other organizational news

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](#). A second option for this discussion will be held on January 25, 2022 (from 5-6pm), also available on [Zoom](#). For more information, including the links to the Zoom meetings, please see the [CME website](#).

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 for access to the latest town hall recording.

Now Available: Northern Health Antimicrobial Mobile Assistant – Firstline (formerly known as Spectrum)

What is it?

- Firstline is a mobile app that can be customized to deliver local antimicrobial stewardship and infectious diseases resources within any hospital or health system.

How do we access it?

- Download the mobile app for free from your app store (available for IOS and android) or access [online](#) from your desktop.

How do we navigate it?

- Go to the [NH Antimicrobial Stewardship](#) page for an intro on navigating the application

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, December 27

- 108 nursing assessments
- 39 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Port Clements, Port Edward, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, Tumbler Ridge, Fort Nelson, Telkwa, Chetwynd, Metlakatla, and Lethbridge (AB)

Tuesday, December 28

- 134 nursing assessments
- 54 primary care provider appointments from Masset, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Dawson Creek, Terrace, Pouce Coupe, Fort St John, Quesnel, Smithers, Port Edward, Burns Lake, Skidegate, Chetwynd, Wells, Kitimat, New Hazelton, and Brantford (ON)

Wednesday, December 29

- 119 nursing assessments
- 54 primary care provider appointments from Fort St John, Terrace, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Houston, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Buick, Southbank, Lax Kw'alaams, Granisle, Vanderhoof, Rolla, Mackenzie, Tumbler Ridge, Hartley Bay, Topley, Edmonton (AB), Telkwa, and Nipawin (SK)

Thursday, December 30

- 123 nursing assessments
- 70 primary care provider appointments from Arras, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Groundbirch, Houston, Kitimat, Port Edward, Prince George, Prince Rupert,

Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Thornhill, Dease Lake, Hudson's Hope, and Qualicum Beach

Friday, December 31

- 110 nursing assessments
- 55 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Goodlow, Houston, Hudson's Hope, Prince George, Progress, Quesnel, Taylor, Terrace, Thornhill, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Chetwynd, Fort St John, Moberly Lake, Victoria, and Kitimat

Saturday, January 1

- 84 nursing assessments
- 31 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Fort St John, Houston, Hudson's Hope, Kitimat, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Rolla, Terrace, Valemount, Tumbler Ridge, Smithers, Telkwa, Thornhill, Fraser Lake, and Vanderhoof

Sunday, January 2

- 119 nursing assessments
- 31 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Hartley Bay, Houston, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Smithers, and Hudson's Hope

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](#).