



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A weekly update for medical staff*

**February 8, 2022**

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## **Clinical guidelines**

### **COVID-19 antiviral treatments**

The British Columbia COVID-19 Therapeutics Committee provides guidance on the most current research on the use of therapies in the management of COVID-19. For more information, please see the [BCCDC treatments page](#).

Please note:

- An interim roster of Pharmacist on-call support has been put in place
- Access will be through the [NH Virtual Clinic](#) to reach the COVID Pharmacist on Call (7 days/week)
  - **New Clinician dedicated line 250-961-4936**
  - The clinic can be reached from 10 am-10 pm, and a COVID-19 antiviral nurse and on-call pharmacist are available from 10 am-6 pm (7 days/week)
- NH Virtual Clinic will receive prescriptions for nirmatrelvir/ritonavir (Paxlovid) and requests for Sotrovimab and then will refer to the COVID Pharmacist-on-call to assist with eligibility assessments and coordinate.
- Prescriptions for Paxlovid are to be faxed to the Virtual Clinic central line 250-561-1927 and they will be routed for dispensing, as appropriate.
- **Important note:** do not provide a Paxlovid prescription directly to a patient or to a community pharmacy directly due to limited provincial supply. Stock is all being managed through the health authorities at this time.
- Education sessions can be requested from the Provincial Academic Detailing Pharmacists at [PAD@gov.bc.ca](mailto:PAD@gov.bc.ca).

For additional information:

- [Health Care Provider Information](#) on sotrovimab (Xevudy) and nirmatrelvir/ritonavir (Paxlovid)

- [CTC clinical practice guide](#)
- Practice tool 1 – [assessment guide for clinicians](#)
- Practice tool 2 – [CEV Criteria](#)
- Practice tool 3 – [drug interactions and contraindications](#)
- [Paxlovid info for patients](#)
- [Sotrovimab info for patients](#)

### Information webinar: Prescribing COVID-19 anti-viral medications

With the arrival of the new COVID-19 anti-viral medications in BC, there are a number of requirements doctors need to know when it comes to prescribing Paxlovid and Sotrovimab including the treatment window for each, dosage protocols, how they contradict or interact with other medications, etc.

Please join Doctors of BC, in partnership with the Provincial Health Services Authority, on Wednesday, February 9 from 6-7 pm ([via Zoom](#)) for an information webinar on prescribing these anti-viral medications.

For more information, including how to register, please visit the [Doctors of BC website](#).

Please note: if you are unable to participate, the session will be recorded and the video will be posted to the [Doctors of BC COVID-19 webpage](#) as soon as it's available.

## COVID-19 news and updates

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### 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 February 7, **26, 137** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **1, 235**
- New cases: **109**
- Currently in hospital: **38**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **13**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **288**

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](#) – February 7, 2022
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – February 3, 2022

## 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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### FNHA Community Situation Report: Toxic Drug Poisoning Events and Deaths

Each month, the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) reports on the number of toxic drug poisoning events and deaths that have taken place in First Nations populations in BC. In the report, the FNHA also summarizes the actions that the FNHA is taking in response to the toxic drug emergency.

In October 2021 there were a total of 311 paramedic-attended drug poisoning events reported among First Nations people. This represents a 6.1% increase from the previous month and a 3% increase from October of last year.

First Nations people represented 19.4% of all toxic drug poisoning events in October. Women represented 38.1% of all First Nations toxic drug poisoning events; among other residents, 22.6% of all drug poisoning events were women.

Since the Overdose Emergency was declared in 2016 until the end of October 2021, there were 1129 First Nations Lives were lost due to toxic drug poisoning.

Actions that FN Health has taken include First Nations Treatment and Healing Centres, Intensive Case Management (ICM) Teams, Indigenous land-based healing services, “Not Just Naloxone” training, the development of a network of peer coordinators, hiring of harm reduction educators, dispensing opioid agonist therapy (OAT) and distributing naloxone.

For the full report please see the [Toxic Drug Poisoning Events and Deaths and FNHA's Response](#).

## Other organizational news

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### UBC Therapeutics Initiative Webinar: Collaborative polypharmacy medication reviews in the South Peace

On Wednesday, February 9 (from 12-1 pm) the UBC Therapeutics Initiative will be offering a webinar to discuss the collaborative polypharmacy medication reviews in the South Peace.

For more information about the webinar, including how to register, please visit the [UBC Therapeutics Initiative website](#).

For information about the South Peace polypharmacy project, please visit the [NH Stories site](#).

### Have you self-reported your choice to immunize against influenza?

Have you self-reported your choice to immunize against influenza this year? It's not too late to vaccinate, influenza season can last until April. By fighting four of the most common predicted strains, the influenza vaccine can prevent sickness in up to 80% of people. Northern Health requires all staff to self-report their choice to vaccinate. The link to self-report can be found [here](#).

### Dragon Medical One software update

The Dragon Medical One (DMO) speech recognition tool is being updated. There are a number of new features, some of which are highlighted below. For more information on these changes, read the [DMO Update-Feb 2022](#) (OurNH link) article (requires access to the NH network).

#### Summary of New Key Features

- Improved text controls (such as adding new lines or paragraphs), and the ability to configure your text controls preference
- Seamlessly switching microphone devices (e.g., between a PowerMic, and PowerMic Mobile)
- Easier workflow for spelling-out content
- Default formatting options for dates, times, measurements, etc.

For more information on Dragon Medical One, check out the new DMO webpage [Dragon speech recognition | Physicians \(northernhealth.ca\)](#).

### Physician Quality Improvement Patient Partners Workshop

Healthcare is all about the patient, so why not ask the patient what would improve the system? NH PQI will be offering a workshop that will help suggest ways to include patient partners on your quality improvement project teams.

This virtual workshop will run on March 9 from 5:30-7:30 pm via Zoom. Please RSVP for the workshop at [physicianqi@northernhealth.ca](mailto:physicianqi@northernhealth.ca) or [the Northern Health Physician Quality Improvement website](#).

### **Physician Quality Improvement Liberating Structures workshop**

Liberating Structures are a fun and engaging way to bring a team together to create some excitement, collaboration and come away with meaningful and practical solutions for improvement. You will learn a few of the skills/tools to apply in your workplace.

This workshop will be offered on April 20, from 5:30-6:30 pm. Reimbursement and CME credit are available.

Please RSVP to [physicianpqi@northernhealth.ca](mailto:physicianpqi@northernhealth.ca) or via the [NH PQI website](#).

### **Resources for patients with chronic pain (virtual)**

The CHANGEpain clinic in Vancouver provides a wide range of pain-related education in an online group medical visit format. The group visits are MSP-billable so there is no cost to patients with a valid BC health number. Numerous sessions are offered daily, with topics ranging from general education like Pain Neuroscience, to more specific chronic pain conditions, such as Persistent Head & Face Pain, along with physical conditioning classes in stretching, yoga and pilates. Patients can self-register for these group medical visits.

- [Group Medical Visit Listing](#)
- [Group Medical Visit Calendar](#)

### **Education Opportunity: Provincial Perinatal Substance Use Project's first virtual conference – Realizing the Provincial Vision 2022: Perinatal Substance Use**

- **Dates:** February 9-10, 2022 at 9 am – 4 pm PST
- **Location:** Virtual event
- **Cost:** Free
- **Objective:** Gather together health care professionals, physicians, health care leaders, Indigenous leaders and Knowledge Keepers, policymakers, cross-sector partners and people with lived and living experience to network, learn and share perspectives on evidence-informed, leading practices, wise practices and culturally safe care that are contributing to strengthening the perinatal substance use continuum of care.

To learn more:

- Registration link: [Realizing the Provincial Vision 2022: Perinatal Substance Use](#)
- Overview: [Provincial Perinatal Substance Use Project \(PPSUP\)](#)
- Questions? Email [ppsup@phsa.ca](mailto:ppsup@phsa.ca)

### **Town hall meetings for medical staff**

Northern Health has 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! After every 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:

- [February 22 \(5-6 pm\): Northern Education Rounds \(NHMAC Cultural Safety Action Plan\)](#)
- [March 2 \(5-6 pm\): Pandemic update](#)

Dates and log-in 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.

## 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, January 31

- 240 nursing assessments
- 68 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Hudson's Hope, Mackenzie, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd, Fort Nelson, Prince George, Quesnel, Smithers, Burns Lake, and Charlie Lake

#### Tuesday, February 1

- 256 nursing assessments
- 47 primary care provider appointments Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Prince George, Salmon Arm, Terrace, Batnuni Lake, Chetwynd, Leduc (AB), Smithers, Thornhill, Houston, Moberly Lake, and Taylor

#### Wednesday, February 2

- 213 nursing assessments
- 43 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Farmington, Fort St John, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Chetwynd, Hartley Bay, Moberly Lake, Smithers, Terrace, Quesnel, Houston, Leduc (AB), and Thornhill

#### Thursday, February 3

- 219 nursing assessments
- 49 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, New Hazelton, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, Thornhill, Fort St James, Fort St John, and Hartley Bay

**Friday, February 4**

- 178 nursing assessments
- 54 primary care provider appointments from Arras, Campbell River, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Tumbler Ridge, Hazelton, Houston, Telkwa, Endako, Port Edward, Quesnel, Moricetown, and Vanderhoof

**Saturday, February 5**

- 112 nursing assessments
- 42 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Hudson's Hope, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, Kitimat, and Hartley Bay

**Sunday, February 6**

- 126 nursing assessments
- 38 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Fort St John, Hudson's Hope, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, Valemount, Dawson Creek, Tumbler Ridge, and Thornhill

## 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](#).