



# MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

*A weekly update for medical staff*

**March 1, 2022**

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## **Clinical guidelines**

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### **Recall – Powdered infant formula products**

Certain powdered infant formula products under the Abbott brand have been recalled due to possible *Cronobacter sakazakii* and *Salmonella* contamination. These include a variety of powdered Similac products.

There have been reported illnesses in the United States associated with the consumption of these products. However, there have been no reported illnesses in Canada associated with the consumption of these products.

Affected products should not be used, consumed, served, distributed, or sold.

For a list of affected products, their codes, and expiration dates, see the [Government of Canada website page for this recall](#).

### **Important information on prescribing COVID-19 antiviral medications**

From [Divisions Dispatch – February 23](#)

Doctors of BC, in partnership with the Provincial Health Services Authority, recently hosted a member webinar on prescribing the new COVID-19 antiviral medications as there are a number of requirements doctors need to know.

- Watch a recording of the webinar: "[Prescribing COVID-19 anti-viral medications](#)."
- [View the presentation slide deck](#) (PDF).

For more information, including how and when to reach out to your health authority for access to these therapies, the latest information about the supply of antivirals, and how doctors can best support their patients, visit Doctors of BC's [COVID-19 resource page](#). Doctors with further questions can contact [covid19@doctorsofbc.ca](mailto:covid19@doctorsofbc.ca).

## 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 28, **28, 469** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- New cases: **14**
- Currently in hospital: **47**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **12**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **313**

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 28, 2022
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – February 24, 2022

### At-home rapid antigen testing kits

Starting February 28, Northern Health staff and physicians will be able to pick up rapid antigen tests to bring home for future use for themselves and their household.

Test kits will be available at your primary work site. These tests are for staff and physicians and members of their household to use, as needed, **if they develop symptoms while off work**. This proactive approach is intended to make it easy to self-test and stay home if you are feeling unwell.

Your site leadership will notify you where to pick up RAT kits when they are available, from your primary work location. Those who are working from home, should connect with their manager for pick up details.

### Novavax/Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine

Health Canada has recently approved the protein-based [Novavax/Nuvaxovid](#) COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine is approved for people who are 18 years of age and older. Its safety and effectiveness in people younger than 18 years of age have not yet been established.

It is not yet available for use, but people interested in this vaccine can call [1-833-838-2323](tel:1-833-838-2323) for more information and to request this vaccine.

## Upcoming event: March 8 virtual session offers information to health-care providers about post-COVID-19 recovery & care

Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) is helping to provide primary care providers and their patients with resources and virtual learning sessions to support those experiencing long-term symptoms of COVID-19. PHSA team members are involved in a collaborative provincial network, called the [Post-COVID Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Network \(PC-ICCN\)](#). The network offers opportunities for health-care providers and patients in BC who experience long-term symptoms of COVID-19.

PC-ICCN has developed an educational program (based on the [global ECHO model](#)) for primary care providers to care for post-COVID-19 patients. Each month, a free one-hour session is scheduled on Zoom. Sessions include a 30-minute presentation from specialists on participant-identified topics, a case presentation submitted by any participant, and sharing of resources and recommendations.

The next session ([Self-Management Strategies, Resources and Tools for Common Post-COVID-19 Symptoms](#)) is on Tuesday, March 8 from 12-1 pm. Visit the [session link](#) for information about speakers, learning objectives, and registration (before March 8).

For more details about the BC ECHO for Post-COVID-19 Recovery and future sessions, please visit [their website](#). For more information about the Post-COVID Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Network, please [visit their homepage on PHSA.ca](#).

## Now Available: New guidelines for mild-moderately ill COVID-19 patients now available in Firstline (including contact information for NH Virtual Clinic COVID-19 therapy support line)

### What is Firstline?

- 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

## 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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### **First Nations Health Authority Bad Dope Alert Issued for Fort St. James, Binche, Tl'az'ten, and Nak'azdli**

The First Nations Health Authority has issued a bad dope alert for the communities of Fort St. James, Binche, Tl'az'ten, and Nak'azdli.

The toxic drug circulating is sold as down or heroin. It may be different colours, causes heavy and prolonged sedation, and may require more naloxone to reverse. This information is supported by what peers are seeing in community. The drugs have not been tested at this time.

#### **Safer Drug Use Tips:** [Safer Sex & Drug Use | Toward the Heart](#)

- [Learn to recognize and respond to different kinds of overdoses. | Toward the Heart](#)
- Use local overdose prevention sites (OPS) where available
- Use with someone and stagger use so someone can respond to an OD
- Use Be Safe or Lifeguard apps if you are using alone
- Start low and go slow
- Mixing substances increases risk
- Carry and be trained on using naloxone: [Training | Toward the Heart](#)

This alert expires March 11, 2022.

### **Addressing the toxic drug supply crisis in Northern BC: Developing person centred strategies**

On behalf of the BC Support Unit Northern Centre and Northern Health you are invited to take part in a virtual strategic dialogue focused on Addressing the Toxic Drug Supply Crisis in Northern BC: Developing Person Centered Strategies. This event is scheduled for **Friday March 4, 2022 from 8 am-12 pm**.

We are pleased to welcome a number of speakers to provide updates on the toxic drug supply crisis in northern BC and to highlight current work and examples of improving integrated care. There will also be dedicated time for small group case discussions to share experiences and improve knowledge between clinicians, peers and leaders who plan and deliver services that impact people who use drugs.

This event requires registration. Please register on the [Eventbrite page for this event](#).

## Other organizational news

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### Safer Infant Sleep – Webinar

Perinatal Services BC (PSBC) has updated the [Safer Infant Sleep](#) practice Resource for Health-Care Providers. This resource offers providers with current, evidence-based information and key messages to help facilitate and encourage an open discussion with parents/caregivers on infant safe sleep practices with the intent of reducing the rate of sudden, unexpected infant death during sleep in BC.

To introduce the Safer Infant Sleep resource, PSBC is hosting a [Zoom webinar](#) on March 3, at 12 pm – please register using the [Zoom webinar link](#).

Please also see the [Safer Infant Sleep Practice Resource for Health Care Providers](#) for more information.

### Health authority parking sites

As of March 4, 2022, pay parking will be reinstated at BC health authority sites to ensure that parking spots are available for patients, staff, volunteers and visitors, and so that free parking can continue to be extended to those who regularly receive certain treatments in acute-care settings.

Free parking at provincial health-care facilities will continue for patients receiving dialysis treatment or undergoing cancer treatment in acute-care programs, and for parents or caregivers of children staying in the hospital overnight. Volunteers will still be able to park for free, and financial hardship provisions will continue to be managed on a case-by-case basis by health authorities.

For more information, please see the [Province of BC news release](#).

### Introducing two-factor authentication for BMO Spend Dynamics

BMO is introducing a new two-factor authentication method as an extra layer of security to help protect you from unauthorized access. Starting on March 14, 2022 you will be required to register for new two-factor authentication upon your next successful log in to BMO Spend Dynamics. This functionality will replace the current multi-factor authentication which requires you to select and enter security questions when prompted.

Starting on March 14, after you log in, you will be prompted to register for two-factor authentication. There are two convenient ways to register:

- BMO Spend Dynamics App (Recommended – for those with NH owned mobile devices)
- Email (Secondary option for personal devices, or for those who log-in with multiple usernames and passwords)

For more information, please refer to the memo attached to the emailed digest.

**Provide feedback on NH policies, procedures and clinical practice standards - Invitation to complete survey by March 11, 2022**

All NH staff and physicians are invited to provide feedback about their experience accessing policy documents through the NH Policies, Procedures and Clinical Practice Standards page. This feedback will help us to better understand how policy users search and retrieve regional policies, procedures and clinical practice standards, and will be used to inform future improvements.

Survey overview:

- Taking part in [this confidential survey](#) is completely voluntary and will take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete
- The survey is open from February 22 – March 11, 2022. Please only complete the survey once during this period
- Survey results will be shared in a subsequent Policy Newsletter (to be added to this quarterly distribution list, email [PoliciesStandards@northernhealth.ca](mailto:PoliciesStandards@northernhealth.ca))
- Questions? Contact Kait Greer, Policy Coordinator at [kaitlyn.greer@northernhealth.ca](mailto:kaitlyn.greer@northernhealth.ca)

**Year-end processing deadlines 2021-2022: Purchasing card activity and employee reimbursements**

All Purchasing Card transactions made up to and including March 31, 2022 must be coded by cardholders/employees in [BMO Spend Dynamics](#), and submitted for approval by April 5, 2022. Approving Managers have until April 6, 2022 to approve all transactions.

Reimbursements completed and approved by March 31, 2022 will be processed April 1st and paid on April 8th.

It is imperative to complete transaction coding, receipt submission, and manager approval processes in [BMO Spend Dynamics](#) during the month of March in order to record purchases in the correct account codes for year end.

**Transcription/Dictation software update: New dictation telephone number**

On March 2, 2022, dictation/transcription software will be upgraded which will result in a change to the dictation telephone number.

Current Dictation Number	New Dictation Number
1-844-771-3958	1-833-613-1697

On March 2, physicians calling the old dictation number will be notified in a recorded message to hang up, and call 1-833-613-1697. For internal (NH) phones, “locals” currently in use for dictation will be redirected to connect to the new number.

For more information about this change, please contact the Quality Assurance team at [rtspendingteam@northernhealth.ca](mailto:rtspendingteam@northernhealth.ca) or 1-844-565-5950. For technical issues, please submit a ticket to the Service Desk (1-888-558-4357).

## Town hall meetings and CME events 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. There are also many interesting continuing medical education presentations coming up that we will be showcasing.

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:

- [March 2 \(5-6 pm\): Update on the pandemic, testing and immunizations](#)
- [March 8 \(5-6 pm\): Northern Education Rounds \(hospital complaints process\)](#)

Dates and log-in information for these events will be posted to the [Continuing Medical Education site](#). The town hall events will be recorded.

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

## UHNBC Medical Imaging department phones will be refreshed Wednesday March 9 and first floor old wing tentatively scheduled for March 23! Get the updated PG Phone Refresh Master Phone List and learn more about how this impacts you

The new Cisco phone system will soon be installed on the second and third floor phones at UHNBC (excluding new wings).

In addition to changing the phones, two significant changes will be taking place:

- Some phone numbers will get a new 10 digit number
- Local dialing will change from 4 to 6-digits

**Will my number change?** Wherever we can, we are trying to keep numbers the same but there will be some circumstances that require us to change your number. To find out if your number is changing, refer to the [March 2022 - Updated PG Phone Refresh Master List](#). Numbers will be added as we work through different areas of the hospital. Share your new number with frequent contacts and by updating your email signature and voicemail message in advance. Number changes to the Global Address Listing will be initiated by the project team at the time of the cutover. **If your department is scheduled for replacement in the next month and you don't see your number on this list or it is wrong**, please contact [phone.help@northernhealth.ca](mailto:phone.help@northernhealth.ca)

\*Managers with a new number that require an EARL call routing change should submit a request via the ITS Service Desk

**What about my extension?** All 4-digit dialing will become 6-digit dialing by adding a prefix of 50. For example, if you used to dial 5511 to call for IPT 1, you will now dial 505511. This allows for internal 6-digit dialing across all upgraded NH sites and no long distance charges. For a list of NH Cisco site prefixes, click [here](#).

**What about faxing?** Faxing services will also be upgraded to provide an enhanced experience. Faxing will now be 10-digits (no 9 or 1 needed). Some fax numbers will also change, but the old and new numbers will work for a period of 30 days so that contacts can be updated.

**How can I get training on my new phone?** Remote training sessions (via Teams) will be offered closer to the cutover dates for each department. Stay tune for more updates.

Issues? Contact us [Phone.Help@northernhealth.ca](mailto:Phone.Help@northernhealth.ca)

## **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, February 21**

- 21 nursing assessments
- 39 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Fort St James, Fort St John, Fraser Lake, Houston, Prince George, Smithers, Terrace, and Thornhill

#### **Tuesday, February 22**

- 87 nursing assessments
- 52 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Hartley Bay, Houston, Lower Post, Moberly Lake, Morice Town, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Taylor, Terrace, Topley, and Tumbler Ridge

#### **Wednesday, February 23**

- 109 nursing assessments
- 53 primary care provider appointments from Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Courtenay, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Germansen Landing, Houston, Kitwanga, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Taylor, Terrace, and Thornhill

#### **Thursday, February 24**

- 87 nursing assessments
- 65 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Cecil Lake, Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson, Fort St John, Groundbirch, Hartley Bay, Moberly Lake, Kitimat, Kitwanga, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, South Hazelton, Terrace, and Thornhill

#### **Friday, February 25**

- 74 nursing assessments
- 52 primary care provider appointments from Bay Tree, Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Endako, Fort Fraser, Fort St John, Harley Bay, Houston, Port Alberni, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Taylor, Terrace, Thornhill, and Quesnel

**Saturday, February 26**

- 53 nursing assessments
- 33 primary care provider appointments from Cecil Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson, Kincolith, Kitimat, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Tumbler Ridge, and Vanderhoof

**Sunday, February 27**

- 57 nursing assessments
- 28 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Mackenzie, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Rose Prairie, Terrace, 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](#).