



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A weekly update for medical staff

March 8, 2022

In this issue

[COVID-19 news and updates](#)

[Overdose prevention and response](#)

[Other organizational news](#)

[COVID-19 Virtual Clinic data](#)

[Wellness and more](#)

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 March 7, **28, 777** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- New cases: **13**
- Currently in hospital: **22**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **3**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **318**

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

At-home rapid antigen testing kits

Northern Health staff and physicians are now 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.

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

Stigma reduction as an overdose prevention measure

Stigma against people who use drugs (PWUD) results in discrimination, impacts health, and contributes to overdoses. In 2021, BC saw the highest number of illicit drug toxicity deaths ever recorded. Northern Health had the second highest rate in the province with 48 deaths per 100,000 people. Treating people who use substances with respect improves health outcomes and helps save lives.

There are several anti-stigma resources and education materials available both regionally and provincially:

- The [Compassionate Action](#) is an anti-stigma campaign that offers five modules with a series of interactive case study videos. These videos build upon the

[Compassionate Engagement](#) modules, and are designed to engage PWUD and people who provide services, encouraging collaboration and respect. The videos highlight where PWUD often experience stigma and discrimination, and are based on real life experiences.

- The [Beyond Stigma video](#), released by [Subject Matter Research Lab](#), is about stigma and seeking medical attention with opioid use disorder.
- Toward the Heart, the BCCDC, and the Provincial Health Services Authority have produced a document about [respectful language and stigma regarding people who use substances](#).

Northern Health resources:

- [Stigma](#) – Stop stigma, save lives
- [Creating supportive health care environments for people that use substances](#) course on LearningHub

Other organizational news

Northern Centre for Clinical Research Grand Opening – March 21!

Register for in-person or watch virtually via link below

The Northern Centre for Clinical Research grand opening will be held on March 21, 2022, and is open to all Northern Health staff.

The event will be held from 4-6 pm and can be attended in person, or virtually. For in person attendance (at the Learning and Development Centre, UHNBC, Room 0501), please RSVP to tanya.stella@unbc.ca **before March 15** as light catering will be served. For the virtual session, please link to [the Zoom event](#) (the meeting ID is 91770 392007).

Get the latest research and knowledge translation highlights! The fourth edition research and knowledge translation newsletter is now available

The new [research and knowledge translation newsletter](#) (OurNH link) highlights knowledge translation and research activities being supported or developed in Northern Health or in collaboration with our partners. It also includes useful information and educational content for researchers and various stakeholders.

If you liked to be a contributor or have questions, please contact marcelo.bravo@northernhealth.ca.

March is Pharmacy Appreciation Month!

March is Pharmacy Appreciation Month and the NH Pharmacy Department team would like to highlight some of the many services we provide throughout the region. Our team consists of clinical and dispensary pharmacists, technicians, assistants, and administrative staff. We work collaboratively to ensure medications are effective, safe, and readily available for the patients we serve.

Apart from supplying medications to patients in a timely manner, we also ensure patients receive safe and effective therapy by:

- Performing best possible medication histories on patients

- Working with physicians and nurses to review medications
- Providing therapeutic drug monitoring by applying our pharmacokinetic knowledge
- Assisting patients in accessing medications in the community on discharge and communicating with the patient's community pharmacy on discharge
- Providing medication counselling
- Processing and filling medication orders
- Compounding "customized" medication orders specific to a patient's needs
- Managing numerous drug shortages to ensure, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, that patients are receiving the medications they need

Achieving this exceptional performance would not be possible without the collaboration of physician, nursing, and other vital health care colleagues. Communication is the key to providing effective patient care, so if you ever have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to ask a member of your Pharmacy Department team.

Realities of Northern Oncology Conference 2022

The Northern Oncology Conference (RONOC) has gone virtual for 2022 and organizers are excited about the amazing speakers lined up for this year. Topics include: colorectal cancer liver mets, genomics, lung cancer surgery, preparing for Indigenous patients, a breast cancer endocrine therapy update, and staff wellness.

Registration and the event agenda can be found on the [RONOC website](#), or on the [CME website](#). If you require further assistance or have questions about the conference, contact Physician.education@northernhealth.ca or Heather.wozney@northernhealth.ca.

Register Early (before April 11) so you receive your Conference Package in time - door prize tickets and other items are included in your registration!

Registration open for new Privacy Impact Assessment Training Course available on LearningHub!

This introduction course helps build a common foundation, language, and context for privacy impact assessments (PIA) at Northern Health.

This course is a single three hour session, and is a pre-requisite to a subsequent multi-week course (Intermediate Northern Health Privacy Impact Assessment). Course information (including the course outline), and registration is available on the LearningHub website, [Introduction to Northern Health Privacy Impact Assessment](#). This course will be offered on March 14, April 11, May 9, and June 13 from 1-4 pm.

Course activity will be a facilitated walkthrough of the following content posted under "PIA related content" on the Privacy department OurNH page.

OurNH > Departments > Privacy > PIA related content - Privacy Impact Assessment

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)
- Questions? Contact Kait Greer, Policy Coordinator at kaitlyn.greer@northernhealth.ca

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](#).

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 8 \(5-6 pm\): Northern Education Rounds \(hospital complaints process\)](#)
- [April 4 \(5-6 pm\): Northern Education Rounds \(Health Authority Organizational Structures and Co-Leadership\)](#)
- [April 19 \(5-6 pm\): Northern Education Rounds \(Addressing Patient Safety Events\)](#)

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 for access to the latest town hall recording.

Announcement: Physician QI Champion Dr. Kalah Blackstock

NH PQI is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Kalah Blackstock into the NW role of SSC PQI Champion. The PQI Initiative is one of two flagship programs of the Specialist Services Committee (SSC). The SSC represents a partnership between the Government of BC and Doctors of BC, and includes regular representation from health authorities. As such, the PQI initiative is co-designed in collaboration with all health authorities

Please read more information about the role and Dr. Blackstock in the memo attached to the email update.

Announcement: Physician QI Champion Dr. Omowumi Iyaoromi

NH PQI is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Omowumi Iyaoromi into the role of SSC PQI Champion. In this role Dr. Iyaoromi will provide physician leadership and input into the NHA PQI initiative, including physician QI training. She will participate in provincial and regional QI meetings and work collaboratively with other participating physicians. She will also provide one-on-one mentoring to NH physicians and advising PQI staff on program developments. Dr. Iyaoromi will be helping to shape QI training for our region and facilitating quality improvement training sessions, as well.

Please read more information about the role and Dr. Iyaoromi in the memo attached to the email update.

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, February 28

- 76 nursing assessments
- 51 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Kincolith, Mackenzie, Moberly Lake, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, and Valemount

Tuesday, March 1

- 63 nursing assessments
- 61 primary care provider appointments from Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, New Aiyansh, New Hazelton, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Thornhill, Tomslake, and Tumbler Ridge

Wednesday, March 2

- 63 nursing assessments
- 49 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Kitimat, Lake Country, New Aiyansh, Prince George, Rolla, Smithers, Terrace, and Valemount

Thursday, March 3

- 53 nursing assessments
- 55 primary care provider appointments from Barriere, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Kitimat, Port Edward, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, Thornhill, Village of Queen Charlotte, and Wembley (AB)

Friday, March 4

- 35 nursing assessments
- 54 primary care provider appointments from Coquitlam, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Hudson's Hope, Kitimat, Mackenzie, Moberly Lake, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Telkwa, Terrace, Thornhill, and Wembley (AB)

Saturday, March 5

- 21 nursing assessments
- 40 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Kitimat, Port Edward, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Red Deer (AB), Smithers, Terrace, and Thornhill

Sunday, March 6

- 20 nursing assessments
- 34 primary care provider appointments from Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Kitimat, Mackenzie, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Quesnel, Terrace, Thornhill, and Tumbler Ridge

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](#).