



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A weekly update for medical staff

March 29, 2022

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COVID-19 clinical guidelines

Update: Prescribing therapies for mild-moderate COVID-19

The British Columbia COVID-19 Therapeutics Committee (CTC) provides guidance on the most current research on the [use of therapies in the management of COVID-19](#).

To continue reading and for more information about therapy updates, please see the pdf attached to the update email.

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 28, **29, 305** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- New cases: **10**
- Currently in hospital: **23**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **6**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **326**

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 28, 2022
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – March 23, 2022

Protect yourself, those around you and the health care system by getting your booster!

A booster dose is an additional shot of vaccine that helps you maintain and lengthen your protection against severe outcomes of COVID-19. When you get a booster dose, you're helping protect you and the people around you, and the health care system from COVID-19. You will receive either the Moderna or Pfizer (mRNA) vaccine. These vaccines are interchangeable.

NH staff who received their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine **at least six months ago and less than 42 days after their first dose** are **now eligible** for a booster dose. In order to receive an invitation for a booster, staff are required to register with ImmsBC by completing the online registration form at getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca or by phoning the Provincial Call Centre at 1-833-838-2323. All previous dose records will be imported to ImmsBC after registration. In the coming months, more staff groups will become eligible so it is important that all staff are registered in ImmsBC so you are invited when it is your turn.

After receiving a notification, staff are welcome to [book an appointment or drop-in at any NH clinic](#). Once you get your booster, please [submit or update a COVID-19 immunization record](#).

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

Toxic drugs are circulating

Toxic drugs are circulating causing increased drug poisoning events in the North. At this time, it is important to look after each other in community.

Please remember:

- Learn the signs of overdose and how to respond
- Get trained today at www.naloxonetraining.com
- Access a free naloxone kit by finding a [naloxone site](#) near you
- Use in the presence of others, those who know how to respond if overdose occurs
- When using drugs, go slow, use a small amount at first, overdoses are more likely to occur when people feel rushed
- Download overdose prevention apps for free:
 - [LifeGuard](#) and [BeSafe](#) Apps work on your smart phone to send for help in the event that you cannot

Overdose risk is increased when:

- Tolerance is lowered: after a period of non-use, or if you are using substances for the first time
- You have been sick, tired, run down, dehydrated or have liver issues
- You mix substances, including alcohol or prescription drugs
- The substance is stronger than you are used to

For more information about reducing risk, see our [Safer Drug Use Tips](#)

Other organizational news

Red cell and factor product redistribution

In a provincial and national rarity, Northern Health (NH) has been recognized by the [BC Provincial Blood Coordinating Office](#) (PBCO). NH was awarded in December 2021 for Red Cell and Factor Redistribution and Utilization Management Initiatives in the 2020-2021 year.

For more information, including which awards were given to NH, please visit the [physician website](#).

Physician highlight

The [NH Stories site](#) is a great place to read stories about NH physicians, staff, events, insights, and much more! This month, we are featuring the Physician Quality Improvement podcast, [Qualitycast North](#)! This podcast features the stories of Northern physicians and their quality improvement projects aimed to improve health care in the North!

If you have a story to tell, or have a colleague you'd like to spotlight, please reach out to Kim Matheson at kimberly.matheson@northernhealth.ca.

Invitation to BC ECHO for Post-COVID-19 Recovery – Session 9 (April 12, 12-1 pm)!

Based on the [global ECHO model](#), the BC ECHO for Post-COVID-19 Recovery (part of the Post-COVID Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Network) is a free virtual learning community of specialists and community health care providers who use instructive and case-based learning to improve care for patients recovering from symptoms post COVID-19. Each monthly ECHO session is an hour, and starts with a 30-minute presentation from specialists on participant-identified topics, followed by a case presentation submitted by any participant. Each session will wrap up with resources and recommendations. Sessions will be recorded and made available to all registered attendees.

The ninth session, “Physical Rehabilitation and Return to Work for the Post-COVID-19 Patient”, will be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 12-1pm. For more information, including presenter information, learning objectives, and to register, please visit the [meeting registration page](#). For more details about the BC ECHO for Post-COVID-19 Recovery, future sessions, and for recordings of previous sessions, please visit the [BC ECHO for Post-COVID-19 Recovery website](#). For more details about the Post-COVID Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Network (PC-ICCN), visit phsa.ca/PostCOVID.

SIRvivor BC: Exercise for prostate cancer

SIRvivor BC is a free specialized exercise program for men who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer, in any stage of treatment or recovery. It helps to improve muscle and cardiovascular fitness, meet new people, and learn safe and effective exercises.

This program is offered virtually province-wide, with two sessions per week April 6-June 29, 2022. For more information or to register, call Lisa at 778-281-0694 or email inspiredlifestyles@shaw.ca.

Choose to Move: Physical activity for adults 65+

Choose to Move is a free three month program for adults 65+ who are looking to increase their physical activity levels. The program includes weekly group meetings, one-on-one goal setting and coaching, and a three month gym pass.

In-person delivery in Prince George as well as virtual delivery options are planned to start in early May. For more information or to register, call Lisa at 778-281-0694.

Education session – Understanding NH Lactation Services: Overview and Q+A with regional NH Lactation Consultant, Brittney McCullough

- Do you have practice questions about supporting families who are experiencing breastfeeding challenges (e.g. painful latch, use of a nipple shield, or supplementation by bottle)?
- Are you looking to strengthen your practice in providing virtual breastfeeding support?
- Did you know that NH has a lactation consultant who can provide support to health care providers and clients across the region?

Learn more in an upcoming session: [Understanding NH Lactation Services: Overview and Q&A](#). This session will provide an overview of regional NH Lactation Support services by Brittney McCullough, regional NH Lactation Consultant (LC), based in Prince George. In this session, Brittney will:

- Describe specialized breastfeeding support by an LC
- Describe how to refer clients to regional Lactation Support services
- Provide tips and tricks for offering basic breastfeeding support to families in a virtual way

Two session options are available:

- Tuesday, April 12, 2022 - 9:30-11 am
- Wednesday, April 20, 2022 - 1-2:30 pm

Register on the LearningHub: [NHA – CL – Understanding NH Lactation Services: Overview and Q+A](#)

Note: Health professionals who support families with infant feeding are recommended to take at least 20 hours of breastfeeding education, such as the Step 2 Breastfeeding Essentials course (access to which can be requested [here](#))

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:

- [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.

Select UHNBC first floor department phones will be refreshed! Get the updated PG Phone Refresh Master Phone List and learn more about how this impacts you

We are pleased to announce the upcoming installation of the new Cisco phone system for the following first floor departments at UHNBC:

Ambulatory Care	NICU
Biomed	OR Booking

Cast	Pre-surgical screening
Hemo	Renal
Infection Control	Trauma Program
Maternity	

Please review this memo for the information that you will need and stay tuned for upcoming schedule announcement.

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

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

How do I call a code? Cisco and Nortel phones can now dial either 2222 or 502222 and their calls will be routed to the code phone at Switchboard.

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

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, March 21

- 34 nursing assessments
- 64 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Kitimat, Mackenzie, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, and Tumbler Ridge

Tuesday, March 22

- 38 nursing assessments
- 62 primary care provider appointments from Baldonnel, Burns Lake, Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St Joh, Houston, Kitimat, New Aiyansh, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Terrace, Thornhill, and Tumbler Ridge

Wednesday, March 23

- 34 nursing assessments
- 63 primary care provider appointments Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Kelowna, Port Edward, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Telkwa, and Terrace

Thursday, March 24

- 37 nursing assessments
- 62 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Kitimat, Kitwanga, Metlakatla, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Taylor, Telkwa, Terrace, and Thornhill

Friday, March 25

- 26 nursing assessments
- 57 primary care provider appointments Burns Lake, Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Edmonton (AB), Fort St James, Fort St John, Houston, Mackenzie, Mississauga (ON), Pouce Coupe, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Terrace, and Thornhill

Saturday, March 26

- 19 nursing assessments
- 42 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Fraser, Fort St John, Kitimat, Mackenzie, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, and Tumbler Ridge

Sunday, March 27

- 21 nursing assessments
- 31 primary care provider appointments from Charlie Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Kamloops, Kitimat, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, and Terrace

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](#).