



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A weekly update for medical staff

April 5, 2022

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COVID-19 clinical guidelines

Staying healthy: Using your COVID-19 toolkit

Northern Health is working hard to keep Northerners healthy and safe

As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, you may wonder what tools you still have to protect yourself. Over the past few years, we've learned what helps keep us healthy. These tools can help us to find balance and stay safe as restrictions are eased.

In this short animated video, we [review the COVID-19 tools](#) we have in our toolkits to help us stay healthy and safe. To see each of the COVID safety tools we have at our disposal in action, **watch the full video**. Learn more about the ways you can help keep healthy on the [Northern Health website](#).

And remember, we're all in this together – thanks for doing your part!

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 April 1, **29, 413** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- New cases: **27** (per the April 4 BC Government COVID-19 pandemic update, Northern Health reports 36 new cases. The numbers of total and new cases are provisional and will be updated when verified in the weekly report starting April 7)

- Currently in hospital: **19**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **5**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **330** (an update on number of deaths related to COVID-19 will be provided on April 7. Please watch the [BC Government pandemic updates](#) and/or the [COVID-19 Dashboard](#))

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](#) – April 4, 2022
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – March 31, 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

Take Home Naloxone (THN) information

Naloxone is a medication that temporarily reverses the effects of an opioid such as fentanyl, morphine, and heroin. It is available in injectable form free of charge through the provincial [Take Home Naloxone \(THN\) program](#) to anyone at risk of an overdose or at risk of witnessing one.

Naloxone is also available as a nasal spray. This form is not covered through the provincial program. FNHA offers free [nasal naloxone](#) to eligible individuals.

It is recommended that you also carry injectable naloxone if you have nasal naloxone as the nasal form may not work in all individuals.

Notable differences between injectable and nasal naloxone:

- Injectable naloxone is more effective on [fentanyl muscle induced rigidity](#).
- One spray of nasal naloxone is equivalent to five naloxone injections.
- There is a higher likelihood of precipitated withdrawal with nasal naloxone.
- For more information, see FNHA's [comparison of injectable and nasal naloxone](#).

For training on THN, see the [Toward the Heart training and resources page](#). Additionally, you can register to become a TNH site to distribute kits. For more information about this program, please see the [Toward the Heart THN site](#). To find a site offering take home naloxone kits, please visit the [Toward the Heart find a site page](#).

Other organizational news

New Mills Memorial Hospital design has an updated look

The exterior design of the new Mills Memorial Hospital has been updated with a more neutral look that blends into Terrace's mountainous landscape.

When we released the original draft of the exterior design in the fall of 2021, we received significant feedback. In the new design, white and grey panels have replaced many orange panels in the original design. The top floor is also much lighter. The footprint of the building, which is based on the design of the services and amenities inside, remains the same. We've also kept the wood aesthetic and accent features for the main floor and entrances.

Go to [the Mills Memorial Hospital replacement Let's Talk page](#) to see rendering of the new MMH exterior design, as well as the most up to date information about the Mills Memorial Hospital Replacement project.

Fourth annual Health xChange - Call for presenters!

On June 16, 2022, Health Research BC, SFU, and the Vancouver Foundation will host the fourth annual Health xChange and first Canadian Knowledge Mobilization networking event, asking **“how can youth-led and youth-engaged approaches help to re-define research and knowledge?”**

Using a PechaKucha format (20 slides, shown for 20 seconds each), presenters will share stories about how their youth-engaged research (led by or done in meaningful collaboration with youth, 12 to 29 years) can improve health, social, and/or economic wellbeing for young people.

We are inviting presentations from across the full spectrum of BC youth focused research. For information about possible topics, how to submit a short story or video, and how to apply to be a presenter, please visit the [Health xChange Vancouver webpage](#). (Please note that youth presenters will be compensated.)

Announcement – Physician Quality Improvement Champion

The Physician Quality Improvement (PQI) team is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Navpreet Sidhu into the NI 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.

For more information, please see the announcement attached to the email digest.

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

Please note: the new guidelines for mild-moderately ill COVID-19 patients are also available in Firstline (including contact information for COVID-19 therapy support).

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 19 \(5-6 pm\): Northern Education Rounds \(Addressing Patient Safety Events\)](#)
- [May 10 \(5-6 pm\): Northern Education Rounds \(Incorporating the Physician Voice at Northern Health\)](#)
- May 25 (5-6 pm): To be determined

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.

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 28

- 36 nursing assessments
- 56 primary care provider appointments from Arras, Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Thornhill, and Tumbler Ridge

Tuesday, March 29

- 43 nursing assessments
- 48 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Groundbirch, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Taylor, Terrace, and Thornhill

Wednesday, March 30

- 42 nursing assessments
- 58 primary care provider appointments Aiyansh, Arras, Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Hudson's Hope, Kitimat, Kitwanga, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace and Thornhill

Thursday, March 31

- 30 nursing assessments
- 57 primary care provider appointments from Dawson Creek, Fort St John, Houston, Hudson's Hope, Kitamaat Village, Port Edward, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Queen Charlotte City, Quesnel, Terrace and Witset

Friday, April 1

- 24 nursing assessments
- 54 primary care provider appointments Arras, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St James, Fort St John, Kitimat, Kitwanga, Metlakatla, New Aiyansh, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Taylor, Terrace, Thornhill, and Wells

Saturday, April 2

- 9 nursing assessments
- 51 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Saskatchewan (AB), Fort St John, Houston, Kincolith, Kinistino (SK), Mackenzie, Oona River, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Taylor, Terrace, and Thornhill

Sunday, April 3

- 13 nursing assessments
- 36 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Fraser, Fort St John, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Telkwa, 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](#).