



MEDICAL STAFF DIGEST

A weekly update for medical staff

May 24, 2022

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Clinical guidelines

Monkeypox

On May 20, 2022, there were reports of [health officials investigating two reported cases of monkeypox in BC](#). Officials determined these individuals had not been exposed and there are currently **no cases under investigation in BC**. For more information about the virus, symptoms, and BCCDC procedures, please review the following resources:

- Attached PHSA document (attached to email digest)
- BCCDC [Reports of Monkeypox in BC](#) news article
- [BCCDC monkeypox page](#) (includes information about transmission, diagnosis, testing, infection prevention and control, and treatment)

Please obtain infection control guidance and report suspected cases to the local Medical Health Officer immediately.

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 May 19, **30, 133** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- New cases: **99**
- Currently in hospital: **23**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **3**

- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **344**

For the latest provincial numbers, see the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated every Thursday. 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](#). The following reports are updated every Thursday:

- [BC COVID-19 weekly pandemic updates](#)
- [BCCDC Situation Reports](#)

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

What's In My Drugs: Informational video released from BC Centre on Substance Use Drug Checking Project

The BC Centre on Substance Use (BCCSU) Drug Checking Project has released "What's in My Drugs?," a new informational video about drug checking services in BC. The four minute documentary-style video:

- Was filmed at the Molson Overdose Prevention Site (MOPS) in Vancouver,
- Depicts what happens when a person goes to a drug checking service, and
- Includes interviews with a drug checking technician and an expert, who provide insight into why drug checking is an important harm reduction strategy.

Find a drug checking site [here](#). Watch the video [here](#).

Other organizational news

BC Family Doctor Day (May 19)

On May 19, we celebrated BC Family Doctor Day. Thank you, BC family doctors, for your tireless devotion to your calling, your continued commitment to the collaborative vision that strengthens our communities, and your devoted care of your patients and their families. Please read the letter from Northern Health leadership that was attached to the email digest, and [this article on the NH Stories site](#) for information about BC Family Doctor Day, and a deep thank you to all of the family physicians, residents, and medical students in our province.

Physiotherapy month – Week four challenge

Welcome to the week four challenge of Physiotherapy Month! This week's challenge is to log 10,000 steps from Monday to Friday. Don't forget to track your activity on the challenge tracking sheet!

Did you know?

Increasing the amount of steps you take every day, even by as few as 2,000 steps, can be as easy as taking the stairs instead of the elevator or parking your car away from the building entrance. If you have questions about other ways to increase your step count, a physiotherapist could help you find ways to increase your physical activity in a safe way!

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact [Stephanie Haberstock](#) (Regional Clinical Practice Lead, Physiotherapy) via email or 250-219-0074.

Communicable Disease Virtual Support Unit Pilot Update

Northern Health's (NH) Communicable Disease Virtual Support Unit (CDVSU) launched April 28, 2022. It provides broad scope reportable communicable disease (RCD) follow-up virtually via specialized, centralized structure. It is in place on a trial basis until decisions are made around sustainability of the model and service.

Anticipated Benefits:

Short term, the CDVSU enables NH to retain core case and contact management-skilled staff in case of surges in communicable disease (CD) levels now that public health measures are relaxed, or should there be an emergence of new COVID 19 variants of concern.

Longer term, should the service be sustained, it is anticipated that the CDVSU will streamline communication and workflow, enhance CD service provision for the northern population, use specialized CD nurses to full capacity, provide relief to chronically understaffed local teams, and enhance the capacity of regional Population and Public Health teams.

Scope of CDVSU service

All RCDs are included in CDVSU scope, with the following exceptions:

1. RCDs that are already followed up by another specialized team that is most qualified

2. follow up for point of care functions that require face-to-face care, for example testing, provision of medication, sample collection, follow-up with hard-to-reach clients, etc.
3. if a test is ordered by an STI certified nurse that works as an NH Primary Care Nurse, follow-up will be done by that nurse
4. in First Nations communities, if a local nurse is available, follow-up will be done by a Community Health Nurse
5. Active and Latent Tuberculosis follow-up. Will be reassessed if CDVSU is sustained beyond pilot phase

HIV follow-up will remain in interprofessional team (IPT) primary care nurse (PCN) scope for the time being, with aim to transition these functions to CDVSU by late June.

Impacts to Primary Care Providers (PCPs)

The CDVSU will not change when and how NH engages with PCPs for CD follow-up. It will change who engages with PCPs. If follow-up is in scope for the CDVSU, then PCPs can expect to liaise with CD nurses in the CDVSU structure.

PCPs will continue to refer suspect cases to the CD Hub phone per standard process: 250-645-3794 or Toll Free 1-855-565-2990. General questions related to the CDVSU are welcome at CDVSU@northernhealth.ca.

Deadline coming up: Pick your COVID-19 Recognition gift or donation

If you haven't picked your [gift package or donation](#) option from the [NH Gift Selection Form](#) as a small token of thanks for the incredible work of NH staff and physicians during the COVID-19 pandemic, please note that **the form closes on June 1, 2022!** In order to choose your gift or donation, please:

1. Go to [the form](#)
2. Fill out or select:
 - Your information (for logistical purposes)
 - Your gift package or donation preference
 - Your community*

More information is available on the form.

*Remote workers located outside the NH region should select "Other (please specify)" for their community. These staff will be contacted shortly after the form closes with more information.

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:

- May 26 (12-1 pm): Northern Health Indigenous Health presents: Northern Realities in the NH region (one hour CME)
 - [Join via Zoom](#)
- [June 15 \(5-6 pm\): Town Hall \(Northern Health is going from paper to digital: What is the plan?\)](#) Speakers: Dr. Dr. Andrew Deonarine (Medical Lead, Informatics), Dr. Dana Cole, (Regional Director, Pharmacy Services; Clinical Lead, Safer Care), and Bjorn Butow (Director, Clinical Information Systems)
- June 16 (12-1 pm): Northern Health Indigenous Health presents: BC First Nations Health Governance Structures (one hour CME)
 - [Join via Zoom](#)

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.

The way PDFs open is changing

Starting May 19, the way you open a PDF (such as a policy or leave request form) will change. If you are opening a PDF from a NH site you will need to *Enable All Features*. If you are opening a PDF from a non-NH site you will need to download it first.

Please take a minute to read the [Adobe PDF Quick Guide](#) (OurNH link) hosted on the [Information & Technology page of OurNH](#).

UHNBC ground floor department phones will be refreshed May 31, 2022! 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 **UHNBC ground floor on Tuesday, May 31, 2022, starting at 7 pm**. Please see below for more details.

Effectuated Departments:

Dietary	Maintenance
Food Services	Pharmacy
Housekeeping	Rehab
Laundry	Sterile Processing
LDC	Stores

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

- Some phone numbers will get a new 10-digit number/local
- 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 a change.** To find out if your number is changing, refer to the [list of departmental phone numbers](#). Share your new number with frequent contacts and by updating your email signature and voicemail message in advance. Changes to the Global Address Listing will be initiated by the project team at the time of the cutover. **If 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

What about my extension? All your 4-digit dialing will become 6-digit dialing by adding a prefix of 50. For example, if you used to dial 2444 to call the ER, you will now dial 502444. For non-refreshed areas of UHNBC, you will add a prefix of 70. For example, if you used to dial 2420 to call for Lab, you will now dial 702406. As we continue to refresh other departments at UHNBC, you will use the 50 pre-fixes for those as well (refreshed depts. listed below). 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](#).

- If working in a department with a Nortel (older style) phone, you will use the 6-digit number (starting with 50) to call refreshed areas and continue to use the 4-digit number for non-refreshed areas.
- Vocera number changes should be completed by your department's Super User
- MBMD number changes will be made by the MBMD Administrator after the change
- **Codes can be called by dialing EITHER 502222 or 2222 from ANY phone**

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. You will receive a separate communication to alert you of the timelines around this change.

How can I get training on my new phone?

Click on the Teams link below to sign up.

- [Thursday, May 26- 1500-1530](#)
- [Friday, May 27- 1000-1030](#)
- [Monday, May 30- 0900-0930](#)

Questions/Issues

Contact 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, May 16

- 11 nursing assessments
- 67 primary care provider appointments from Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Kitimat, Kitwanga, Pouce Coupe, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Taylor, Telkwa, Terrace, Tomslake, Thornhill, and Tumbler Ridge

Tuesday, May 17

- 28 nursing assessments
- 64 primary care provider appointments from Arras, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Hazelton, Houston, Kitimat, Montney, Peace River Regional District, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Taylor, Terrace, Thornhill, Topley, and Tumbler Ridge

Wednesday, May 18

- 44 nursing assessments
- 67 primary care provider appointments from Arras, Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Houston, Kitimat, Masset, Moberly Lake, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Progress, Quesnel, Terrace, and Thornhill

Thursday, May 19

- 15 nursing assessments
- 55 primary care provider appointments from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Houston, Kitimat, Laxgalts'ap, Mackenzie, Pouce Coupe, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Telkwa, Terrace, Thornhill, Tumbler Ridge, and Valemount

Friday, May 20

- 27 nursing assessments
- 72 primary care provider appointments from Charlie Lake, Chemainus, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Houston, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Taylor, Terrace, Thornhill, Tumbler Ridge, and Valemount

Saturday, May 21

- 15 nursing assessments
- 33 primary care provider appointments from Blue River, Fort St. John, Hixon, Houston, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, and Thornhill

Sunday, May 22

- 8 nursing assessments
- 39 primary care provider appointments from Abbotsford, Burns Lake, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Fraser Lake, Kitimat, Moberly Lake, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, Rolla, Smithers, Terrace, Thornhill, and Vanderhoof

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](#).