



# COVID-19 DAILY DIGEST

MEDICAL STAFF

**Monday, March 30, 2020**

Physician updates will be sent out Monday to Friday. For the latest news and resources on COVID-19, visit the [Coronavirus page on OurNH](#) or on the [physician website](#). Printable PDFs of these updates are on the physician website.

## Provincial case counts and statements

- **As of Monday March 30, 2020, at 1:30 pm**, there were **14** confirmed COVID-19 cases in NH.
- **Province of BC statistics:**
  - Confirmed cases: **970** (**86** new cases since Saturday, March 28)
  - Deaths: **19** (**2** new since Saturday, March 28)
  - In hospital: **106** (**60** in ICU)
  - Recovered: **469**
- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – March 30, 2020.

## Answers to your questions about PPE

### What is direct patient care/ direct care?

This means providing care

- Within 2 metres of a patient, OR
- In direct physical contact with a patient

If you're providing direct patient care, you **should** put on safety goggles/glasses and a surgical/procedure mask at the start of your shift and to wear them for the duration of your shift. Safety glasses are acceptable eyewear with the exception of the highest risk areas – ER, CCU, OR, COVID-19 cohorts where staff should use full face shield or goggles. At the end of your shift, please clean the safety goggles, safety glasses or face shield that you used with Oxivir for reuse by other staff.

PPE is required for all direct care with patients requiring contact, droplet and airborne isolation. When you are providing **direct physical patient care** to patients who are suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients, then you need to wear a gown and gloves. Regular surgical/procedure masks and routine droplet precautions provide appropriate protection against COVID-19.

**When should I wear a gown?**

PPE includes the wearing of an isolation gown **only** when providing direct care to a patient who is on isolation precautions.

If you are not providing direct patient care, you should **NOT** wear PPE; for instance, when delivering patient charts or delivering medications or supplies to a unit.

If working on a COVID ward with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients, your mask, gown and eye protection does not need to be changed between every patient.

**Note:** Routine isolation precautions are not required for residents with positive ARO (Antibiotic Resistant Organisms); for example, MRSA or VRE. Exceptions:

- A new diagnosis
- ICU patients
- Patients with moderate bodily fluids contamination (does not include body fluids if related to a medication; e.g., diarrhea).

These precautions are important to dispel former practices and to **reduce the unnecessary use of isolation gowns**.

**When should I wear gloves?**

- Hand washing or hand hygiene is the best advice
- If you're dealing with body fluids, wear gloves for routine practices, and change them between patients
- Do NOT wear gloves for all encounters:
  - After registering a patient, wash your hands
  - Do not wear gloves while delivering meal trays; instead, wash your hands
  - Unit Clerks working at the desk do not need to wear gloves
- Gloves must be changed between patients when providing direct patient care.

**Be sure to conserve PPE when you can by \*reusing\* them:**

- PPE supplies should be conserved; only those who need PPE should use it.
- Use one mask per shift, changing the mask if it's too damp, soiled, or damaged for safe use, and/or changing the mask if your shift includes a meal break.
- Use the same piece of eye protection (i.e., eye goggles or face shield) throughout your shift, **with appropriate cleaning protocols** at shift end with Oxivir
- Face shields should be cleaned, not disposed of, with the exception of the face shields with a mask attached.
- If there are not enough goggles or face shields, use safety glasses. Safety glasses are adequate without a face shield, unless you're involved in an aerosol-generating medical procedure.
- Clean safety glasses with the same cleaning protocols in place.

**To protect staff and patients, it's vital for us all to focus on the basics:**

- Good hand hygiene
- Coughing/sneezing into your sleeve or into a tissue

- If you have respiratory symptoms, do not come to work

**What is an area of transit?**

This is for staff who are transporting patients. Those staff are considered as being within 2 metres / 6 feet of the patient. Patients with respiratory symptoms should already be wearing a mask.

This does not include staff who are intermittently walking by a patient who is being transported.

**What is the manipulation of specimens?**

Lab staff should follow current processes in place, as they adequately cover the required PPE requirements.

**Temporary suspension of outpatient Hepatitis C testing**

- BCCDC performs all of our Hepatitis C testing.
- They are also performing high volumes of COVID-19 testing.
- Outpatient Hepatitis C serology, viral load and genotype testing are suspended immediately, with reassessment on April 17/2020 in an effort to reduce non-urgent testing to free up capacity for COVID-19 testing.
- Testing will continue to be performed for hospitalized and emergent patients and for organ donation.

**COVID-19 response guidance for industrial camps**

The Province has provided guidelines for industrial work camps to support their response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to keep workers safe.

The guidelines include:

- Prevention measures and control in camps
- Plans on how to manage individuals with suspected COVID-19 infection
- Outbreak protocols
- Support for camp residents who are self-isolating
- Enacting physical distancing
- Ensuring sufficient infection-control supplies

The [full guidelines](#) are available online through the BCCDC.

**Physicians in self-isolation**

If you're a physician in self-isolation, email Susan Trenholm: [Susan.Trenholm@northernhealth.ca](mailto:Susan.Trenholm@northernhealth.ca)

**Resources available for stress and emotional support****Support Lines**

- **Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP)**
  - **1-844-751-2133** – 24/7 crisis counselling support and/or referral to community resources.

- **Physician Health Program** – supports available through Doctors of BC
  - Refer to information online at: <https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/resource-centre/physicians/physician-health-program-php>
- **BC Crisis Line**
  - Call **310-6789** for access to 24/7 crisis services.

## Trusted links and resources

- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [HealthLink BC FAQ](#)
- [WHO FAQ](#)
- [Health Canada FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 content in other languages](#)
- WorkSafe BC - [COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- Northern Health COVID-19 Online Clinic & Information Line: **1-844-645-7811**
- For **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 webpage on current health topics](#). This page has links to the latest joint statements and orders issued by the Provincial Health Officer and a link to the Government of Canada's travel advice and advisories.

## 24/7 Physician call centre

- Number: 250-645-7897
- Local: 507897
- Toll Free: 1-833-645-7897