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To	Northern Health Staff and Physicians
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Re	COVID19 Response – Ventilator Update and Resource Guide on Ventilator Filtration

As part of our COVID-19 response, considerable planning has been underway to ensure we have the critical care resources required where and when needed in the event of a surge of patients requiring that level of care. As a result of a tremendous amount of work by clinical and all supporting services staff, physicians and Northern Health leaders, hospitals across our region have been transformed to cohort patients that are COVID positive/potential while still ensuring capacity for those requiring care unrelated to a respiratory illness – thank you to everyone involved in those efforts, the results are nothing short of amazing.

Ventilator capacity is of particular interest given the importance of this intervention in treating those critically ill with this virus. Our inventory of adult ventilators in use in ICUs/high acuity units across Northern Health as we led up to this planning work was 16 – please note, this number does not include the large number of anesthesia machines, transport ventilators or the neonatal ventilators that can be set for use on adults. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, we have received our first allocation of 5 additional adult ventilators, bringing the total to 21. By way of update, 3 of these ventilators have been deployed to UHNBC in Prince George and 2 have been deployed to Mills Memorial Hospital in Terrace. With the less-than-expected admissions to date, our ventilator capacity exceeds demand at this time, a very good position to be in.

To support safe use of ventilators, and to control the spread of respiratory pathogens, a [resource guide](#) has been developed on ventilator filtration. Ventilator filters play a key role in protecting the safety of patients on mechanical ventilation and reduce the risk of cross contamination. Filtration also protects health care providers by helping prevent both the inhalation of harmful pathogens and cross contamination with bacteria and viruses that can lead to the spread of infection. Finally, filtration protects the ventilators from contamination with bacteria and viruses which further helps prevent the spread of infection. Thank you to Richelle Maser, Chief Technologist for Respiratory Therapy, and Mark Dahl, Biomedical Technologist, for their work in putting this guide together.

If you would like further information, please contact Dr Slabbert or Beth Ann Derksen at bethann.derksen@nothernhealth.ca