

March 18, 2020



COVID-19 UPDATE

MEDICAL STAFF

For the latest news and resources on COVID-19, visit the [Coronavirus page on OurNH](#).

Provincial updates

- **As of March 17, 2020**, there have been **four** (4) confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Northern Health.
- In the province, there are **186** identified cases.
- On March 18th, the province declared a provincial state of emergency.
- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – March 17, 2020.

COVID-19 outbreak response

British Columbia's health authorities have been directed to move all hospitals in the province to Outbreak Response Phase 2, meaning hospitals will shift to undertaking only urgent and [emergency outpatient clinic](#) and Imaging/Image guided procedures and will postpone all non-urgent procedures. Because every patient encounter is unique, individual care decisions must always represent unique interactions between caregivers and the patient.

Definitions:

- Elective: patients with a wait time target of 12 weeks or greater.
- Urgent: patients with a wait time target of 2, 4, or 6 weeks.
- Emergent: patients requiring unscheduled procedures within 48 hours.

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Clinical guidelines

A COVID-19 clinical guidelines review subcommittee is currently working on developing physician clinical guidelines for COVID-19.

All currently available clinical guidelines are on the [CDC Website](#) and new ones will be posted on the site as they are made available.

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care>

COVID-19 testing for health care workers

It is important to note that regardless of travel history, not all health care workers need testing for COVID-19.

- Health care workers only require testing for COVID-19 if they are symptomatic
- If a health care worker has tested positive for COVID-19, they require a negative test result before returning to work

UPDATE: Reducing visitor access

New posters on visitor access, plus a handout for families/patients, are now available on the [Coronavirus page on OurNH](#). They are also listed below, and will soon be available for ordering through Document Source.

- [COVID-19 visiting rules](#)
- [One Visitor](#)

COVID-19 testing locations

COVID-19 Testing locations are operational in all communities across the region. For testing locations, see [news article on physician website](#).

Please note the testing location for your community and ensure your patients are aware to **NOT present directly to the testing site**. They will be called by a Patient Care Coordinator for their appointment.

The Patient Care Coordinator will call to provide:

1. Testing appointment time.
2. Instructions on how to enter the testing facility.

The designated testing locations are for Primary Care Practices who do not wish to do COVID-19 testing or feel that their practice is not set up to offer this service. We understand some Primary Care Practices are doing their own testing. Please continue with your normal lab collection processes.

Virtual clinic update

Scope of service:

- Screening appropriate patient groups for the likelihood of Corona virus.
- Referral for COVID-19 swabbing as indicated in accordance with current guidelines.
- Refer to higher level of care for physical assessment as required (FP office, UPCC, ER etc.).

As a physician/NP, how can this service be of help to me?

If you would like to have a patient screened for the likelihood of a COVID-19 infection, feel free to have your office refer patients to the line. The providers who are staffing the line are currently using the most up to date BCCDC screening criteria and thus the option of screening patients and giving advice could be performed by you as a provider as well. It is likely best to have a patient's primary care provider do the telephone or virtual screening, if possible (you know your patients best).

Toll-free: 1-844-645-7811

Trusted links

- [Northern Health Internal Memos](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [HealthLink BC FAQ](#)
- [WHO FAQ](#)
- [Health Canada FAQ](#)

24/7 Physician call centre

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