



COVID-19 DAILY DIGEST

MEDICAL STAFF

Thursday, March 26, 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 Wednesday March 25, 2020, at 3 pm**, there were **9** confirmed COVID-19 cases in NH.
- **Province of BC statistics:**
 - Confirmed cases: **659** (**42** new cases)
 - Deaths: **14** (**1** new)
 - In hospital: **64** (**26** in ICU)
 - Recovered: **183**
- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – March 25, 2020.

New provincial guideline: Emergency prioritization of personal protective equipment (PPE)

The PHO has issued a provincial [PPE Allocation Framework](#) on March 25, 2020 that is an intentional process being put into place to ensure we have protected our staff and conserved supplies:

Surgical/Procedural Mask and Eye Protection Use:

- All staff who provide **direct care** to patients in acute care, critical care, long term care, and community care must wear a surgical/procedural mask, eye protection and gloves.

Personnel	Activity	Type of PPE
Physicians and all health care workers (includes MI Techs) in all sectors	Providing direct care to patients	Surgical/Procedural mask, gloves, eye protection (goggles or face shield)

	Providing direct care to COVID-19 patients	Surgical/Procedural mask, gowns, gloves, eye protection (goggles or face shield)
	Aerosol-generating procedures performed on COVID-19 patients	Respirator N95 or equivalent, or reusable respirator if available, gown, gloves, eye protection, apron

- This will require extending the use of your mask and eye protection, by using one mask per shift, changing the mask only if it is too damp, soiled, or damaged for safe use, and / or changing the mask if the health care worker’s shift includes a meal break
- Eye protection (i.e. eye goggles or face shield) to be used throughout the shift with appropriate cleaning protocols at shift end. When goggles and face shields are depleted, safety glasses can be used with the same cleaning protocols in place. Disposable and Reusable face shields to be disinfected with Accel wipes and re-used.
- Gloves **must** be changed between patients.
- All health care workers and staff who have direct contact with patients who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or a presumptive diagnosis must engage in routine droplet and contact precautions, which includes a gown.

View the [full memo](#) on the physician website.

UPDATE: Interim therapeutic guidance developed for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

Key change: Hydroxychloroquine cannot be recommended outside of clinical trials at this time.

Please be advised that the [interim therapeutic guidelines have been updated](#) based on new information from the College of Physicians regarding the use of unproven treatments and medications for COVID-19. This statement provided clear direction that physicians and nurse practitioners should not prescribe these therapies for COVID-19 outside the context of a clinical trial, and pharmacists should not dispense them if they do; hydroxychloroquine was included in this directive.

In order to align with the rest of the province and heed the warning of our governing professional bodies, the NH COVID-19 Therapeutics and Treatment Reference Group has revised the recommendations previously released on March 24th, removing any recommendations for use of hydroxychloroquine in the setting of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Help with setting up telehealth to allow for virtual patient care

Your local Practice Support Program Coach has been trained to help you set up a Zoom account for your virtual clinic. If you don’t have a Practice Support Coach and need help with setting up a virtual clinic, please phone 250-640-9912.

The Rural Coordination Centre of BC (RCCbc) is providing [free Zoom accounts to all physicians in the NH region](#), as well as to those staff who support them. The MSP field has been made optional, so it shouldn't be needed to submit your request.

IT is also hosting physician-led demo sessions on telehealth. See the [March 25, 2020 Daily Physician Digest](#) for information on when and how to register. Please note, the 5:15 – 6:00pm sessions have been cancelled. More sessions will be scheduled if needed.

Insurance for physicians affected by COVID-19

Doctors of BC would like to remind you that there is [insurance coverage available](#) for physicians who are affected by COVID-19, either through sickness or income loss.

Cleaning your mobile devices, headsets and desk phones – pro tip: No Cavi Wipes!

Don't forget to wipe down your mobile device, headset and desk phone **at the beginning and end of each shift, or if you are switching off with another person**. Some tips from ITS' [Telecom Equipment Cleaning Procedures](#):

- Don't use Cavi Wipes, **this can damage your equipment**.
- Use only a soft, lint-free cloth.
- Avoid excessive wiping or excessive saturation.
- Unplug all power sources, devices, and cables.
- Avoid aerosol sprays, bleaches, and abrasives.
- Avoid spraying cleaners directly onto your device.
- Acceptable cleaning agents:
 - Isopropyl alcohol (70%) (alcohol wipes) **recommended**
 - Ethyl alcohol (70%)
 - Clorox Wipes
 - Ultraviolet Cleaning

Physicians in self-isolation

If you are a physician in self-isolation, please send an email to Susan Trenholm informing her. 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

- [Northern Health Internal Memos](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [HealthLink BC FAQ](#)
- [WHO FAQ](#)
- [Health Canada FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 content in other languages](#)

24/7 Physician call centre

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