

Date:	April 3, 2020
To:	Physicians and long-term care home and assisted living facility managers
From:	Aaron Bond, Executive Lead, Elder Program; Dr. Dick Raymond, Medical Lead, Elder Program; Angela De Smit, Executive Sponsor for the NH EOC LTC/AL Task Group
Re:	Transitioning from Nebulizer to MDI Treatment

As per Northern Health (NH) Infection Control Policies and those endorsed by the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), it is important to avoid performing aerosol generating procedures during a respiratory outbreak or pandemic as there is a risk of transmitting aerosolized pathogens such as COVID-19.

The use of small or large volume wet nebulizers for the administration of bronchodilators is discouraged as it falls within the category of a high-risk aerosol generating medical procedure (AGMP). It is well documented that bronchodilator therapy by metered dose inhaler (MDI) is at least equal if not superior to bronchodilator therapy by wet nebulization. **Therefore, all patients receiving nebulized salbutamol or ipratropium therapy should be converted to MDI administration techniques whenever possible.**

Conversion information can be found in the Northern Health Nebulizer to MDI Conversion Program: [10-110-5011 Neb to MDI Conversion Program](#)

Instructional aids in the form of 50-page tear off pads with full color illustrations for teaching inhaler device technique are available at Document Source as well:

- 10-123-6021 Metered Dose Inhaler Instructions Pad
- 10-123-6022 Metered Dose Inhaler with Spacer Device Instructions Pad
- 10-123-6017 Diskus Inhaler Instructions Pad
- 10-123-6016 Breezehaler Inhaler Instructions Pad
- 10-123-6019 Genuair Inhaler Instructions Pad
- 10-123-6018 Ellipta Inhaler Instructions Pad
- 10-123-6020 Handihaler Inhaler Instructions Pad
- 10-123-6023 Turbuhaler Inhaler Instructions Pad
- 10-123-6024 Twisthaler Inhaler Instruction Pad
- 10-123-6025 Respimat Inhaler Instructions Pad

If an individual absolutely cannot have a medication converted to MDI format, careful consideration must be given to the benefits and risks of wet nebulizing the medication(s). A decision to proceed with nebulized treatments requires that personnel don appropriate PPE per current NH and BCCDC policy. Ideally, nebulized bronchodilator treatments will be administered in a negative isolation room. However, since negative isolation is not an option for many facilities, the therapy may also be provided in a separate room with the door closed.