



COVID-19 DAILY DIGEST

MEDICAL STAFF

Thursday, April 9, 2020

Please note, due to the Easter long weekend, the next issue of the COVID-19 Daily Digest will come out on Tuesday, April 14.

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 Thursday, April 9, 2020**, there were **24** confirmed COVID-19 cases in NH.
- **Province of BC statistics:**
 - Confirmed cases: **1370** (**34** new cases)
 - Deaths: **50** (**2** new)
 - In hospital: **132** (**68** in ICU)
 - Recovered: **858**
- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – April 8, 2020. (April 9, 2020 joint statement unavailable at time of release)

A message from Cathy Ulrich, NH CEO

The last few weeks have been a time of extraordinary challenge for Northern Health's staff members and physicians.

With COVID-19 and its impacts on how we work and live, you have all been living profoundly changed lives, both personally and professionally.

In addition to coping with new responsibilities and larger workloads, most of you also have to cope with worries about your own health and that of your families. Many of you are separated from remote family members, able to visit them only virtually, unsure of when you'll see them again.

Despite all of this stress and change, I am very proud of how Northern Health staff members are coping. I see you going above and beyond, working extra hours and doing whatever is needed to help keep the Northerners we serve as safe and healthy as possible.

My special thanks go out to those on the front lines: those dedicated nurses, physicians, care aides, rehabilitation staff, and technologists who provide direct care: your dedication is inspiring.

Another group of critical staff are those who keep our facilities clean, including laundry workers and housekeepers, and the kitchen staff who provide meals for patients and residents. We could not do this without you.

Those who work in office settings have also played a vital role, including Information Technology Systems staff members, who have made it easier for many of us to work from home, HR and Finance in supporting this complex situation as it evolves, and all of those who serve on Emergency Operations Committees, from the community level up to the NH EOC.

I hope that some of you are able to take a break this holiday weekend and spend time with your immediate family. I am proud to work alongside all of you.

With warm regards and thanks,

Cathy Ulrich

Reprocessing of N95 Respirators

- NH, along with all health authorities, is [collecting used N95 masks for reprocessing](#).
- The masks will be sterilized per industry standards and placed in storage/stockpile
- The stockpiled masks will be used only if new N95s or equivalent respirators are not available.

For further details, see the [BCCDC PPE Bulletin](#).

More groups now recommended for testing

As provincial capacity for COVID-19 testing is increasing, so is the list of groups for whom clinicians are now recommended to order tests, based on their clinical judgement.

The expanded list of groups for whom testing is now recommended includes those that are more vulnerable to complications due to COVID-19, or people who care for these vulnerable people.

Please note that the updated testing guidelines and expanded capacity for testing in B.C. are a relatively new development, and Northern Health testing sites are working to increase their capacity to accommodate any increase in testing volumes.

For complete recommendations, see the [full memo](#).

Managing COVID-19 in the surgical program

- As part of the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the province has developed [interim protocols for Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) for Surgical Procedures Requiring Intubation](#) (applies to adults and older adults). This protocol does not apply to surgical procedures that do not require intubation.
- Implementation of the IPC surgical procedures protocol may vary based on regional or local standard operating procedures. Should there be significant shortage of one or more components of PPE, Northern Health EOC has approved alternate protocols and procedures that may be considered, adapted and updated accordingly.
- Clarification is required on ventilation approaches in the absence of negative pressure operating rooms, as is the time required for complete room air exchanges, in each site. Basic principles highlighting the implications of adjusting ventilation in a formalized positive pressure built environment are being finalized and will be shared with administrative and physician leadership as soon as available to inform site level decisions.

For further details, see the [full memo](#).

Temporary emergency child care for essential workers

To support parents who are essential service workers during the response to novel coronavirus (COVID-19), the Province is launching a new process.

This process will match parents, who are working on the front lines of B.C.'s COVID-19 response and have children up to five years of age, with child care in their communities.

Starting today, essential workers can fill out a new “parent” form to identify their need for urgent child care. Forms can be accessed by calling 1 888 338-6622 and selecting Option 4, or online: www.gov.bc.ca/essential-service-child-care

For further details, [see the BC Government press release](#).

Updated clinical documents

- [NH COVID-19 Therapeutic Guidelines for Adults](#)
 - In addition to a slight name change, this update includes addition of antibiotic option for beta-lactam allergy as well as inclusion of links to COVID-19 related order sets and critical care guidelines.
- [UHNBC COVID-19 Airway Team Activation Protocol](#)
 - Updated to streamline the process based on feedback received from our first few activations.
- [COVID-19 Adult Admissions Order for Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19](#)
 - Revisions made in the “Notify MRP” and antibiotic order section.

Physicians in self-isolation

If you're a physician in self-isolation, email Susan Trenholm: 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

Rural Outreach Support group (ROSe) for COVID-19

24/7 additional information, support, or guidance

- Toll Free: 1-888-918-0626