

May 2025

Welcome to the Northern Health community update! Stay connected as we bring you monthly updates and valuable insight into health care in the North.

Want more frequent updates? [Follow Northern Health on Facebook](#) where we share news, stories, tips and ideas on healthy living.

Organization and Community News



Fort St. James hospital name reflects First Nations heritage

The new hospital in Fort St. James is now called Nats'oojeh [Nat-Soo-Jay] Hospital and Health Centre, reflecting the Dakelh First Nations heritage. The name was chosen in consultation with the guidance of Elders and language experts from the Nak'azdli, Binche, Tl'azt'en, Yekooche and Takla First Nations. Nats'oojeh means "everyone healing" in the Dakelh language. The larger meaning is healing through medicine, holistic care, looking after loved ones and helping each other. [Read the full story on the BC government website.](#)



B.C. invests in planning for northern youth support centre

Children and youth in Northern BC will benefit from a provincial investment of \$500,000 to Lheidli T'enneh First Nation for a feasibility study to help design a new service hub in the region. "The first phase of work required extensive consultation with municipalities, First Nations, and partners throughout the North. This process informed the clear need to meet children and youth where they are at," said Chief Dolleen Logan, Lheidli T'enneh First Nation. [Read the full story on the BC government website.](#)



Health Career Access Scholarships for high school graduates in Kitimat-Stikine region

Six scholarships in the amount of \$2,500 are available to individuals who are accepted to a recognized post-secondary health science program, or equivalent. Applicants must have either graduated from a high school in the Regional District Kitimat-Stikine (RDKS) region in the last 12 months or are graduating in the current year. Applicants must also be currently residing in the RDKS region with a minimum two years residency and be interested in employment with Northern Health following program completion. [For more information, click here.](#)



Travel light with NH Connections!

Need to travel for health care reasons? Book your trip with [NH Connections](#).

To ensure a comfortable ride for all, [please adhere to our luggage guidelines](#). Excessive luggage can cause delays and inconvenience. Let's keep it simple and travel smart!



What's in your emergency kit?

Emergency Preparedness Week (May 4-10, 2025) serves as a reminder of the importance of readiness in the face of unexpected events. Emergencies can happen at any time and being prepared is key to reducing risks and ensuring a swift response. Take this as an opportunity to reflect, plan, and take action toward emergency preparedness. Find emergency kit packing lists, plan templates, and other resources on the [Prepared BC website](#).



BC residents advised to check their immunization records ahead of travel

With ten measles cases reported in the province in people returning from travel, public health officials are reminding people in BC to check that their immunizations are up to date, particularly if you plan to travel. [Read more on the BC Centre for Disease Control website.](#)

Northern Health offers the measles vaccine by appointment. Many primary care, walk-in clinics and pharmacies carry the measles vaccine. Please call ahead to make sure the vaccine is available before you visit. Find an [immunization clinic](#) near you.



Appropriate use of the emergency department and options for accessing health care

Emergency rooms in the North can face increasing strain at this time of year. Help take the pressure off the doctors and nurses that serve our communities by seeking care through these options, when you can:

- Call your family care provider
- Visit an urgent primary care centre or primary care clinic if one is available in your community
- Check out [HealthLinkBC.ca](#) or speak to a nurse at 8-1-1
- Talk to your local pharmacist about their expanded services, and [book an appointment with a pharmacist](#).
- If you do not have a family doctor or nurse practitioner, book an appointment with the [Northern Health Virtual Clinic](#) at 1-844-645-7811
- Call 1-855-344-3800 to book an appointment with the [First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day](#)

For life-threatening emergencies like chest pains, difficulty breathing, broken bones, or severe bleeding, the ER is the place to be. Call 9-1-1 for transport to your nearest available and appropriate facility. For more information, please visit our [service interruptions page](#).

Health Human Resources (HHR)

The items in this Health Human Resources (HHR) section highlight some of NH's efforts to strengthen health care in the North by improving staff recruitment and retention as part of [BC's Health Human Resources Strategy](#).



Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive (RRRI) extended to June 30, 2025

The RRRI is a \$30,000 incentive for a 2-year return of service. It applies to those who are new to a rural and remote community who previously worked in urban/metro centre AND have relocated to a Northern Health rural/remote community or are new to BC's public health sector. [Visit our Careers website for more information.](#)



Adventures in Healthcare 2025: Peace Region

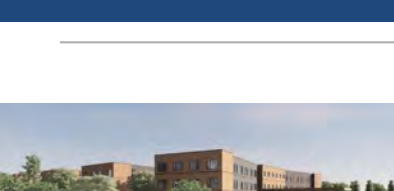
Adventures in Healthcare is a Rotary initiative, involving partnerships with the [University of Northern British Columbia \(UNBC\)](#), [Northern Lights College](#), Northern Health (NH), School District 59 (South Peace), School District 60 (North Peace), and the two Rotary Clubs of Fort St. John: [the Fort St. John Rotary Club](#) and the [Fort St. John Sunrise Rotary Club](#).

The program is designed to introduce high school students to a variety of health care careers and pathways, engage students through hands-on activities, workshops, and interactions with professionals, and inspire the next generation of health care workers. [Read more on our Stories site.](#)



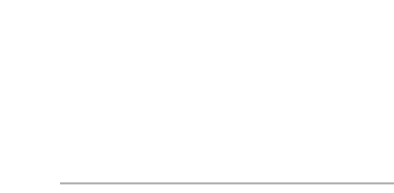
Healthcare starts at home

Last month, Northern Health partnered with [College of New Caledonia](#), [University of Northern British Columbia](#), [Northern Lights College](#) and [Coast Mountain College](#) to promote the amazing post-secondary health care programs offered in Northern BC. [This postcard](#) was sent out to the entire Northern BC region with the aim to remind residents of local opportunities in health care education!



Celebrating National Indigenous Nurses Day with Maggie Kotowich

National Indigenous Nurses Day fell on the first day of National Nursing Week (May 12-18) this year. [We highlighted Maggie Kotowich](#), a Student Practice Education Clinical Lead working in Terrace.



Celebrating National Nursing Week with employed student nurses at NH

The theme for National Nursing Week this year was "The power of nurses to transform health." The theme recognizes the tremendous impact nurses have on individuals, communities, and the future of health care. [We highlighted three employed student nurses \(ESNs\)](#), currently on their educational journeys to becoming nurses.



Nursing with a focus on mental health, with Katie Trites

For National Nursing Week, we highlighted Katie Trites, Clinical Practice Lead for Acute Psychiatry, working in Dawson Creek. "During my time in nursing school, I had a nursing instructor who shared a memorable insight. She said, 'nursing is all about being comfortable with being uncomfortable.'" [Read more.](#)



Continuous quality improvement in nursing with Viva Swanson

To wrap up National Nursing Week celebration, we are highlighting Viva Swanson, Executive Director, Nursing – Minimum Nurse to Patient Ratio (mNPR) Implementation. "It's been an incredible journey! I was born and raised in Prince George and have spent the entirety of my nursing career in Northern BC." [Read more.](#)

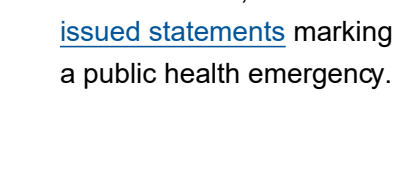
Recruiters on the road

NH's staff and physician recruitment teams have been out in full swing, sharing what kinds of opportunities set Northern BC apart. The recruiters have attended or presented at:

- Apr 30 – **Adventures in Health Care**, Quesnel BC
- May 1-2 – **Alberta Association of Nurses Annual Conference**, Jasper, BC
- May 1-4 – **Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists National Conference**, Jasper, BC
- May 7 – **Adventures in Health Care**, Prince George, BC
- May 7-9 – **Pri-Med Canada Conference and Trade Show**, Toronto, ON
- May 7-9 – **Canadian Association of Occupational Therapy Annual Conference**, Edmonton, AB
- May 8-10 – **Canadian Society for Respiratory Therapists Annual Conference**, Ottawa, ON
- May 15 – **Selkirk Pharmacy Technician Program Presentation**, Virtual
- May 16 – **Doc Talk (Prince George)**, Prince George, BC
- May 16-20 – **American Psychiatric Association**, Los Angeles, USA
- May 21-23 – **OR Nurses Association of Canada Conference**, Calgary, AB
- May 24-28 – **International Emergency Medicine Conference**, Montreal, QC
- May 29-31 – **Canadian Geriatrics Society Annual Scientific Meeting**, Toronto, ON
- May 29-31 – **Canadian Pediatric Society Annual Conference**, Quebec City, QC

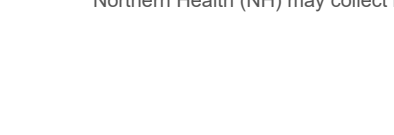
To see highlights of these events and conferences, check out [Northern Health Careers](#).

Capital Projects



Construction begins on Prince George long-term care home

Seniors in Prince George will soon have access to more long-term care as construction starts on a new long-term care village. "Northern B.C.'s growing senior population highlights the need for expanded, expanded long-term care options," said Bowinn Ma, Minister of Infrastructure. "This new care village is a vital investment that will provide seniors with the comfort, respect and quality care they deserve, while strengthening our health system and creating good local jobs." [Read more.](#)



Calling artists and photographers!

Northern Health is seeking scenic images from the Peace Region and Northeast BC to be used for custom wall graphics in the new Dawson Creek & District Hospital, opening Spring 2027!

What we're looking for:

- Local and regional scenic photographic images
- Images that reflect the natural beauty, landmarks, and spirit of the region
- For full details about this exciting opportunity, visit [Let's Talk DCDH](#)

NIHU teams on the move: What does each team do?

To make way for the new acute care tower at UHNBC, we're [relocating](#) the services currently offered at the Northern Interior Health Unit (NIHU) starting Spring 2026. [Discover what each team does and where they're headed.](#)

Northern Health Story Highlights

The [Northern Health Stories site](#) is a great place to read about what's going on in Northern Health – people, places, projects, and more! Here are some recent highlights:

- [How volunteering can shape career aspirations: Dianne's experience at UHNBC](#)
- [Making a difference: Kali's volunteer story](#)
- [Teamwork on and off the court: DCDH volleyball team](#)
- [Period of PURPLE Crying Program: Bringing families, volunteers, and health care together](#)
- ["That's gold!" My nursing journey from Australia to Northern BC](#)
- [May is Physiotherapy Month!](#)
- [Roll into spring with GoByBike week](#)
- [Celebrating Kris Shively: Holistic mentor](#)

Ministry of Health highlights

Including highlights from the [Ministry of Health](#) and [Ministry of Mental Health & Addictions](#) that are of interest to all BC residents:

- [More, better home-care supports coming for B.C. seniors](#)
- [Streamlined process cuts wait times, bringing more U.S. nurses to B.C.](#)

Public Health

Northern Health Communities E-Brief – May 2025

The E-Brief is a monthly newsletter sharing resources, learning opportunities, and grant funding that supports community health in Northern BC. [Check out what's new for May 2025.](#)

To subscribe to this monthly newsletter, please email healthycommunities@northernhealth.ca with the subject line "subscribe."

Overdose Prevention and Response

Minister's, provincial health officer's statements on the toxic-drug public health emergency anniversary

Josie Osborne, Minister of Health, and Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer, have [issued statements](#) marking the ninth anniversary of the toxic-drug crisis being declared a public health emergency.

Text alerts for toxic drugs available in the North

In response to the toxic drug emergency, a text message alert system was launched across Northern Health. The system sends text alerts with timely information and up-to-date resources to people who use drugs, those who support them, and community members. It's a public health measure to prevent drug poisonings and deaths and provides. Opt-in by texting JOIN to ALERTS (253787). [More information.](#)

