



COMMUNITY UPDATE

The latest from Northern Health

Wednesday, September 16, 2020

Note: Please share any information in this update as appropriate.

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COVID-19

Provincial case counts and statements

As of September 15, 2020, there have been **225** confirmed COVID-19 cases in Northern Health since the beginning of the pandemic.

A total of **33** of these cases are considered active, and there has been **1** death associated with COVID-19 in the North. As always, it is important that we remain vigilant in our communities.

For the latest provincial numbers, please refer to the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated Monday-Friday. The dashboard may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested. Surveillance reports for COVID-19, which includes breakdown of cases by Health Service Delivery Area, are [posted every Thursday on the BCCDC website](#).

- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – September 15, 2020
- [BCCDC Surveillance report](#) – September 10, 2020

How COVID-19 is affecting back-to-school in Northern B.C.

It's back-to-school time in B.C. and with the current pandemic, things are looking a little different this year. A factsheet has been developed for parents by the Government of B.C. letting you know [what you need to know for the return to school 2020-21](#).

If there is a confirmed COVID-19 case in a school in the NH region, what will happen/what will NH do in response?

- More information on this type of scenario can be found in BC's Back to School Plan - [K-12 Guidelines – COVID Protocols](#)

- If a student or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19, and were potentially infectious while they were at school, public health will perform an investigation to determine if there were any potential close contacts within the school.
- If it is determined that there are close contacts within the school, public health will:
 - Notify the school administrators, and may request contact information for students and/or staff to assist with contact tracing.
 - Provide guidance on what steps should be taken by close contacts and by others in the school.
- Public health may then:
 - Recommend 14-day isolation if necessary (for confirmed close contacts).
 - Recommend monitoring for symptoms if necessary.
 - Provide follow-up recommendations if necessary.
- Schools will provide learning support to students required to self-isolate.
- Together, schools and public health officials will determine if any other actions are necessary.
- School closure will rarely be a necessary measure to protect children. With preventive measures in place (i.e. cohorting, screening, etc.), risk of transmission in school is significantly reduced.
- Parents will be notified by public health if their child has been in close contact with a COVID-positive person; if that happens, the child will be required to self-isolate.

BC Government investment to bring new COVID-19 support

The Province is investing \$1.6 billion in a fall and winter preparedness plan that will significantly build upon and strengthen measures that respond to the health care requirements of COVID-19.

The Government of B.C. is also dedicating \$44.1 million to launch the Health Career Access Program to recruit an estimated 7,000 health care workers for long-term care homes and assisted-living facilities throughout the province.

For further information, see the [full press release](#).

Helpful return to work resources from BC Centre for Disease Control

These links contain information about criteria to assess risk for health care workers exposed to COVID-19 patients while at work, as well as information about returning to work after exposure or illness.

- [Exposures and return to work for health care workers](#)
- [BC Health Care Worker Return to Work Decision Tree](#)

Take the Northern Pediatric Wellness survey

The University of British Columbia and the Northern Pediatric Wellness (NPW) team are looking at how COVID-19 and physical distancing measures have impacted child wellness in the Northern Health region. Take the [short survey](#).

Additional information:

- [NPW Survey invitation letter](#)
- [NPW Survey poster](#)

Trusted links and resources for COVID-19

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): A Northern Health Guide for Your Community](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [HealthLink BC COVID-19 page](#)
- [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**
- Northern Health Environmental Health Officer Line: **1-250-565-7322**
- 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 COVID-19 webpage](#).

Overdose prevention and response

Anti-stigma resource: Compassionate Action Modules Part 2

The [Compassionate Action modules](#) are a series of interactive case study videos about stigma and discrimination experienced by people who use drugs (PWUD) and an accompanying reflection/discussion guide. The videos are based on real-life experiences of PWUD, and build on the [Compassionate Engagement](#) modules.

The modules are designed to engage PWUD and the people who provide services to them, such as health care and frontline service providers, first responders, and organizational managers.

To access the Compassionate Action Modules, visit [Toward the Heart](#).