



# COMMUNITY UPDATE

*The latest from Northern Health*

January 6, 2021

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## COVID-19

### COVID-19 case counts and statements

As of January 5, **2,231** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **464**
- New cases: **45**
- Currently in hospital: **27**
  - Currently admitted to HAU/ICU in hospital: **17**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **31**

For the latest provincial numbers, see the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated Monday-Friday. The dashboard may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested.

Situation reports, including a breakdown of cases by HSDA, are [posted each Friday by the BCCDC](#).

- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – January 5, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – December 18, 2020

### Northern Health continues to administer vaccines

See the latest photos from vaccine clinics in [Fort. St. John](#), [Terrace](#), and [Prince George](#).

Northern Health is distributing the vaccine in accordance with the priority vaccine groups as recommended by the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization](#). As more vaccine shipments arrive, more communities and more groups of people will receive the COVID-19 vaccine. We expect to be able to immunize all Northern BC residents who wish to have the vaccine, by the end of 2021. A detailed immunization plan for the coming months will be posted soon; please watch Northern Health's channels.

For more information about the COVID-19 vaccines, vaccine research, priority populations, and the provincial rollout plan, visit the Government of British Columbia's [COVID-19 Vaccines website](#).

## **New order from Bonnie Henry on industrial camps aims to slow the rate of workers' return**

On December 29, 2020, Dr. Bonnie Henry issued the Industrial Projects Restart Order to large-scale industrial projects in the NH region; specifically, Coastal Gas Link (CGL), Liquefied Natural Gas Canada (LNGC), BC Hydro Site C, Trans Mountain Pipeline (TMX), and Rio Tinto Kemano (RTK).

Most projects had a routine winter break scheduled at the end of December. This provided the opportunity to break the cycle of COVID-19 transmission in many of these project sites.

A rapid return to full operating capacity in the industrial projects after the winter break would create the risk of more outbreaks. The new order seeks to slow the rate of return of workers in January.

The order was developed collaboratively by the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Petroleum Resources; the Ministry of Health; the projects; the Office of the Provincial Health Officer; and Northern Health. It supports projects to increase staffing levels in two steps after their winter break and before February.

For full details, see the [Industrial Projects Restart Order](#).

## **Confused about contact tracing? Check out these updated NH handouts**

Contact tracing is a very effective tool to stop the spread of this virus: it helps keep us all safe.

To help explain this critical step in our COVID-19 prevention strategy, especially in the light of recent changes to Public Health's contact tracing practices, Northern Health has finalized two updated contact tracing handouts.

Feel free to share them with friends, family, patients, or anyone who might find them helpful:

- [What's contact tracing?](#) (overview)
- [What's contact tracing and how does it work?](#) (more detailed)

## Northern Health launches HealthLife patient portal: View your COVID-19 test results (and more) online

HealthLife is a secure mobile-friendly web portal that you can access from your computer or smartphone, similar to online banking.

Northern BC residents who received care at an NH hospital can view their hospital-based health information, including:

- Upcoming appointments
- Lab results, including most COVID-19 tests
- X-ray, ultrasound and other imaging reports
- And more!

For more information about HealthLife and how to sign up, visit the [HealthLife webpage](#).

## 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

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### Alert: Illicit Benzodiazepines (“Benzos”) continue to contaminate street drugs

Illicit Benzodiazepines, known as “Benzos”, are contaminating street drugs and continue to circulate in the NH region. Benzos are a type of medication that “depresses” or slows down your brain activity. When benzos are mixed with opioids (down) there is a higher risk of overdose. Individuals who have overdosed using drugs contaminated with benzos may be difficult to rouse and slow to respond to naloxone.

More information:

- Northern Health Overdose Alert: [Overdose Emergency Information](#)
- Provincial Overdose Alert: [Toward the Heart](#)
- Harm reduction information in the context of COVID-19: [BCCDC](#)

## Other Northern Health news

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### Happy New Year! Three NH babies born on January 1

The North's first baby of 2021 was born in Prince George, and it was a boy! Baby Kace was born at the University Hospital of Northern BC on January 1 at 4:11 am to mom Jessica Penner and dad Kenneth Wray, of Quesnel. Kace weighed in at seven pounds, 11 ounces. See a photo on NH's [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#). Kace was BC's 6<sup>th</sup> baby of 2021; the first was a girl born at BC Women's Hospital in Vancouver at 12:21 am.

The first baby born in the Northeast was a 7lb 8 oz boy born at 8:21 on January 1 at Fort St. John Hospital. The baby, as yet unnamed, was born to mom Kristen McCaughley and dad Corbyn Hubley of Fort St. John. See [a family photo](#).

In the Northwest, the first baby of the year was also a boy, and the third generation of his family to be born at Wrinch Memorial Hospital. The baby, as yet unnamed, was born at 2:18 pm on January 1. His proud parents are mom Royelle Williams and dad Shane Skulsh of Kispiox – see [a photo of the family](#). The baby is welcomed to the world by his stepbrother Tayler.

“Royelle is Gitksan and was born here on Gitksan territory, so it was important to her that her baby was also born in her community,” says midwife Hana Lang. “She worked very hard for a very long time to deliver this babe and I'm so proud of her! Her mom, Jane Williams, was also at the birth; she delivered Royelle here at Wrinch memorial hospital too, and Shane, the father, was also born at Wrinch.”

**Note:** Northern Health formally announces only the babies born on Jan 1. For the first births of 2021 after this date, please check your local news outlets.