



# COMMUNITY UPDATE

*The latest from Northern Health*

**March 17, 2021**

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## COVID-19

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### COVID-19 case counts and statements

As of March 16, **5,271** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **309**
- New cases: **41**
- Currently in hospital: **24**
  - Currently admitted to HAU/ICU in hospital: **14**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **111**

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.

As well, see the [COVID-19 Epidemiology app](#), which visualizes COVID-19 in BC in comparison to other Canadian and global jurisdictions, at the HSDA level. It's updated on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – March 16, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – March 17, 2021

## 22,476 doses of vaccine administered so far in Northern Health

We are grateful for the incredible work underway to increase the number of people who are immunized as we move from Phase 1 and 2 of the COVID-19 immunization plan through to the final two phases.

As the implementation of the immunization plan gains momentum, it provides hope that we will be successful in bringing this pandemic to a close.

Total administered doses in the NH region as of March 15:

- 22,476 (this includes First Nations communities)
  - First doses: 17,770
  - Second doses 4,706

## Updates to age-range eligibility for COVID-19 immunizations in specific communities

Two Northern communities have updated age-range eligibility for COVID-19 immunizations.

**In Prince Rupert**, Everyone 18 and older is now invited to call and book their vaccines! Residents of Prince Rupert and nearby Port Edward can call 1-866-481-2175 to book an appointment for COVID-19 immunizations.

In Fort Nelson, residents age 50+ are invited to make an appointment with the NH Call Centre to help us fill open appointments March 22-26, 2021. Please note, this is a special, first-come first-serve circumstance – anybody aged 50+ who doesn't get an appointment for March, will have the opportunity to get vaccinated later, during Phase 3 of the immunization plan.

For more information, visit <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/covid-19-vaccine-plan#nh-resources>.

## Workforce COVID-19 Immunizations – NH region

Northern Health, in consultation with the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Officer is helping to facilitate the vaccination of workers in high risk locations such as industrial work settings as part of BC's province-wide immunization program.

Additional supply of COVID-19 vaccine in BC is allowing for complementary immunization programs targeting outbreak response in communities and high-risk industrial settings, while Phase 2 of BC's foundational immunization program continues to be implemented for seniors 80 years of age and older, and Indigenous people 65 and older.

Vaccination of workers in high Worrisk industrial settings have been one of the key parts of BC's vaccination strategy, and was planned to start as additional vaccines were approved and become available. This will not impact the completion of Phase 2 immunizations, and the move to Phase 3 and 4 immunizations across the North.

For more details, see the [full information bulletin](#).

## Have you had COVID-19? You no longer need to wait 3 months before getting the vaccine

As of today, the 3 month-deferral of COVID-19 vaccination for people who have previously had COVID-19 is being cancelled. All individuals in eligible priority groups will now be offered COVID-19 vaccine, regardless of any recent history of COVID-19 infection, as long as any acute symptoms have resolved.

This change is being made in the context of improved vaccine supply, and of having already offered vaccine to the highest-priority populations and settings.

If you are a member of an eligible group under BC's COVID-19 Immunization Plan who was contacted by the Northern Health call centre after February 3 and then asked to defer your immunization based on a positive test for COVID-19, please phone again to book your vaccine appointment.

## COVID-19 variant identified in Northern resident

A traveller returning from an international destination who was quarantined in the lower Mainland tested positive for a confirmed variant of COVID-19 (specifically the UK variant). In accordance with the regulations, the traveller isolated in a quarantine hotel and was released after the isolation period was completed. No contacts were exposed.

## COVID-19 Outbreak declared over at Acropolis Manor in Prince Rupert

Northern Health Medical Health Officers have **declared an end** to the COVID-19 outbreak at Acropolis Manor in Prince Rupert.

In total, 33 residents and 24 staff tested positive for COVID-19, and there have been 16 resident deaths associated with this outbreak. There have been no new cases since February 10, 2021.

Northern Health appreciates the patience and understanding of Acropolis Manor residents and families, and the dedication of staff and physicians who continued to provide excellent care during challenging circumstances. And NH again extends condolences to the families, caregivers and friends of those residents who have passed away.

For more details, see the [full information bulletin](#).

## COVID-19 Outbreak declared over at Dawson Creek & District Hospital – Medical Inpatient Unit

Northern Health Medical Health Officers have declared an end to a COVID-19 outbreak on the Medical Inpatient Unit at Dawson Creek & District Hospital.

In total since the outbreak was declared February 7, there were nine patient cases and five staff cases of COVID-19, as well as one death of a patient who had tested positive in

association with the outbreak. There have been no new lab-confirmed cases related to the outbreak since February 12, 2021.

For more details, see the [full information bulletin](#).

## Trusted links and resources for COVID-19

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): A Northern Health Guide for Your Community](#) – watch for a fully updated version (coming soon!)
- [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](#).

## Other organizational news

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### Happy Social Work Week, March 14-21, 2021!

The provincial government has declared March 14-20, 2021 Social Work Week in British Columbia. Social workers throughout BC plan activities that will highlight their essential contribution to the health and well-being of British Columbians. The theme for 2021 is "Social Work is Essential" (from <https://www.bcasw.org/benefits-of-membership/celebrating-social-work/>).

### March is Pharmacy Appreciation Month!

March is Pharmacy Appreciation Month and the NH Pharmacy Department team would like to highlight some of the many services we provide throughout the region.

Our team consists of clinical and dispensary pharmacists, technicians, assistants, and administrative staff. We work collaboratively to ensure medications are effective, safe, and readily available for the patients we serve.

Apart from supplying medications to patients in a timely manner, we also ensure patients receive safe and effective therapy by:

- Performing best possible medication histories on patients
- Working with physicians and nurses to review medications
- Providing therapeutic drug monitoring by applying our pharmacokinetic knowledge

- Assisting patients in accessing medications in the community on discharge and communicating with the patient's community pharmacy on discharge
- Providing medication counselling
- Processing and filling medication orders
- Compounding "customized" medication orders specific to a patient's needs
- Managing numerous drug shortages to ensure, especially during COVID-19, that patients are receiving the medications they need

Achieving this exceptional performance would not be possible without the collaboration of physician, nursing, and other vital health care colleagues.