



COMMUNITY UPDATE

The latest from Northern Health

May 5, 2021

COVID-19

COVID-19 case counts and statements

As of May 4, **7,237** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **167**
- New cases: **14**
- Currently in hospital: **15**
 - Currently admitted to HAU/ICU in hospital: **8**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **140**

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](#) – May 4, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – April 28, 2021

Launch of the Northern Health Virtual Primary and Community Care Clinic

We are excited to advise that Northern Health has launched the Northern Health Virtual Clinic, a permanent expansion of the Northern Health COVID-19 Online Clinic, which was created in March 2020 to serve patients across the region. The Virtual Clinic is designed for:

- Patients without a family doctor or nurse practitioner
- Patients in rural communities for whom access to their family doctor may be limited due to weather or other barriers
- Patients needing after hours health care: Virtual Clinic hours of operation are 10 am to 10 pm, 7 days a week, including holidays
- Patients experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19

The name of the COVID-19 Online Clinic will shift to the Northern Health Virtual Primary and Community Care Clinic to recognize the expanded service offering. The phone number will remain the same: [1-844-645-7811](tel:1-844-645-7811)

The Virtual Clinic will provide a supplemental layer of service to Northern Health's family physicians, who remain the cornerstone of our regional health care system. It aims to provide accessible and same-day health care service, using encrypted technology to ensure a secure experience.

For more information, visit the [Virtual Clinic webpage](#).

Priority COVID-19 vaccinations now available for pregnant people

All pregnant people who are age 16+ are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccines as a priority population through B.C.'s Immunization Plan.

"All Health Canada-approved vaccines are safe and effective, and I encourage everyone to register and receive their vaccine as soon as they are eligible. Today, this includes people who are pregnant," said Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.'s provincial health officer. "We have reviewed the data here in B.C. and this shows pregnant people experience severe illness from COVID-19 at a rate that is similar to people who are in their 50s. By prioritizing pregnant people today, we add another layer of protection for them, their babies and their communities."

To book a vaccine, people who are pregnant can:

- Register at gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated if they have not done so already,
- Phone 1 833 838-2323 and identify as being pregnant. Online booking for pregnant people is not available.

For more information, see the [Government of B.C. news release](#).

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, 5 residents tested positive for COVID-19 in association with the outbreak that was declared April 3, 2021, and four have since recovered. One resident who had tested positive, passed away. There were no associated staff cases.

Northern Health Public Health continues to actively monitor and follow up all laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 among staff and patients at any NH facilities.

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 Virtual 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

Statistics on BC's illicit drug toxicity deaths for March 2021 now available

On April 29, the BC Coroners Service released a [report on the illicit drug toxicity deaths for March 2021](#).

Summary:

- March 2021 (N=158) saw a 41% increase in the number of deaths from March 2020 (N=112).
- This is approximately the same as February 2021
- NH has the highest rate of illicit drug toxicity deaths in the province for 2021, with a rate of 57 deaths per 100,000 individuals

Northern Health Summary

NH saw 12 illicit drug toxicity deaths in March (40 deaths per 100,000 individuals), which is the highest rate in BC for March 2021

- NW has seen 10 illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 for a rate of 52.6 deaths per 100,000 individuals, which is the fifth highest in the province.
 - There were two deaths in March
- NI has seen 20 illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 for a rate of 54.2 deaths per 100,000 individuals, which is the third highest rate in BC.
 - There were seven deaths in March
 - In 2021, the City of Prince George reported 16 deaths

- NE has seen 11 illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 for a rate of 66.9 deaths per 100,000 individuals, which is the highest rate in BC.
 - There were three deaths in March

For additional information on illicit drug toxicity deaths in BC, see the BC Coroners Service website at [Statistical Reports on Deaths in British Columbia](#).