



# COMMUNITY UPDATE

*The latest from Northern Health*

November 10, 2021

## Sections

[COVID-19](#)

[Overdose prevention and response](#)

[Organizational news](#)

## COVID-19

### COVID-19 orders and policy – upcoming and in effect

Northern Health Medical Health Officers have updated and revised the Gatherings and Events COVID-19 Order for Northern Health, effective November 9, 2021.

The updated order includes clarification for Worship Services, and a temporary variance for outdoor Remembrance Day ceremonies on November 11, 2021 (only), removing the proof of vaccine requirement for those events.

An [updated resource](#) can be found on the NH website, explaining and comparing the NH regional orders, and Provincial orders under [BC's Restart Plan](#) (Step 3).

For more information about current Provincial orders (such as the acute- and long-term care visitors policy, and restrictions around gatherings and events), please see:

- [NH Orders and FAQ resources](#)
- [NH Public Health COVID-19 Order Enforcement Actions](#)
- [Provincial and regional restrictions](#)

For complaints or concern related to orders, please call [250-565-7322](tel:250-565-7322) or email [php@northernhealth.ca](mailto:php@northernhealth.ca).

### Northern BC community immunization coverage

Immunization coverage for every community in Northern Health is available for you on the [Northern BC community immunization coverage page](#). This link includes both first and second dose counts and percentages per community and is updated every week.

## Community Toolkit

To empower local partners to share helpful information, we have created a [COVID-19 Community Toolkit](#) - a digital resource for community partners, which includes vaccine clinic information (including [clinic schedules](#)), a community guide, trusted information and links, and more!

## BC vaccination coverage rates and COVID-19 activity

### BCCDC COVID-19 dashboard

Visit the BCCDC [COVID-19 surveillance dashboard](#) for information by local health area (LHA) and community health service area (CHSA).

### COVID-19 Numbers

As of November 9, **16,171** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **557**
- New cases: **103**
- Currently in hospital: **58**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **19**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **232**

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, for a visual comparison of COVID-19 cases in BC by HSDA to other Canadian and global jurisdictions, see the [COVID-19 Epidemiology app](#). It's updated on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

- [BC COVID-19 pandemic update](#) – November 9, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – November 3, 2021

## Trusted links and resources for COVID-19

- [Northern Health online booking form - COVID-19 test](#)
- [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 Primary and Community Care Clinic: **1-844-645-7811**
- Northern Health Environmental Health Officer Line: **1-250-565-7322**
- 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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### Illicit drug toxicity deaths for September 2021 now available (BC Coroners Report – released November 9 2021)

Attached are the most recent Coroner Reports for Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths that contain data until the end of September 2021. These reports were released November 9 2021

#### Summary

- August 2021 (N=181) this was the largest number of suspected deaths ever recorded in August
- September 2021 (N=152) this was the largest number of suspected deaths ever recorded in September
- The number deaths in August and September it equates to approximately 5.5 deaths per day
- In **2021**, VCH had the highest rate of 45 deaths per 100,000 individuals, followed by **NH** with a rate of 43 deaths per 100,000 individuals

#### Northern Health Summary

- **NH** saw 13 illicit drug toxicity deaths in August 2021 and 9 illicit drug toxicity deaths in September 2021
- **NW** has seen 30 illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 for a rate of 51.9 deaths per 100,000 individuals, which is the third highest in BC
  - There were 5 deaths in August
  - There were 2 deaths in September
- **NI** has seen 47 illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 for a rate of 40.9 deaths per 100,000 individuals, which is the sixth highest in BC.
  - There were 7 deaths in August
  - There were 5 deaths in September
- **NE** has seen 20 illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 for a rate of 36.8 deaths per 100,000 individuals, which is the eight highest in BC.
  - There were 1 deaths in August
  - There were 2 deaths in September

Full Reports can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

## Organizational news

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### Qualitycast North

Northern Health's Physician Quality Improvement (PQI) program has a brand new podcast - Qualitycast North hosted by Dr. Shyr Chui!

Episode one, featuring Dr. Denise Jaworsky, is now up. This episode focuses on Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) group medical visits, and how they use patient education to reduce hospital admissions and emergency room visits.

For more information and to listen to the episode, visit the [PQI website](#).

### The FNHA 2022 Winter Wellness Grants are now open

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) is offering Winter Wellness Grants to support community-led, virtual events, small gatherings, or a combination of virtual and small scale in-person celebrations in honour of Winter solstice in 2022. These grants are available for First Nations communities, schools and health and social organizations that provide wellness services to Indigenous British Columbians will be eligible for up to \$2,500 to conduct their own virtual and/or small gathering celebration to honour Winter solstice.

For more information, including how to apply, please visit [the FNHA website](#).

### Flu season is quickly approaching

Getting the influenza vaccination is more important than ever this year, especially with a health authority already experiencing a COVID-19 surge.

With more people returning to the workplace, children back in school and changes to public health mandates, it is expected to see an increase of influenza cases this year compared to last year.

Peak influenza season is from December to February, and it takes a minimum of two weeks for antibodies against the flu to develop fully following vaccination. Northern Health will start offering influenza vaccine beginning the week of October 18, 2021. For more information about flu vaccination, please see:

- [Northern Health influenza information](#)
- [BCCDC influenza information](#)
- [CDC influenza information](#)
- [FNHA influenza information](#)

For information about the flu vaccine clinics being offered in the region, please see the [Northern Health flu information site](#), and the [ImmunizeBC Find an Influenza \(Flu\) Clinic site](#).