



COMMUNITY UPDATE

The latest from Northern Health

December 29, 2021

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COVID-19

COVID-19 orders - Province strengthens COVID-19 measures for safer holiday season

The provincial health officer has implemented additional measures to address rising COVID-19 case counts that could result in increased hospitalizations and critical care admissions and the potential to overstress the health-care system.

Revised provincial health orders took effect on Wednesday, December 22, 2021 at 11:59 pm.

The restrictions will extend to January 18, 2022 at 11:59 pm, and include:

- No organized indoor social events and gatherings of any size;
- Concerts, sports games and theatres reduced to 50% seating capacity, regardless of venue size;
- Closing gyms, fitness centres and dance studios;
- Closing bars and nightclubs; and
- Limiting table sizes at restaurants, cafes and pubs to a maximum of six people per table with physical distancing or barriers.

These provincial orders are applicable to all of British Columbia, while the Northern Health region also has NH-specific public health orders on Gatherings and Events. For more information, please see:

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

For more information or concerns related to Northern Health's Order or compliance with current measures and restrictions, please call 250-565-7322 or email php@northernhealth.ca.

COVID-19 immunization plan

Pediatric dose

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is now available for children 5 to 11. This vaccine uses a lower dose (10 micrograms), at one-third of the dose formulated for older children and adults, which will provide effective protection tailored to children's immune systems. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) advises that children receive a two-dose series of the vaccine with an interval of eight weeks or more between the first and second dose.

For more information about this vaccine (including information about the vaccine and how to register a youth): [COVID-19 vaccines for children 5 to 11](#).

Third dose

The third dose of the COVID-19 vaccination is for some people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised. People who need a third dose [will be contacted](#) by the provincial [Get Vaccinated](#) system.

Booster dose

The booster dose is an additional non-urgent, non-compulsory vaccine that gets immunity back up to a desirable level of protection for an extended period of time. It will be available starting in January 2022.

To book a booster dose, please ensure you're registered in the [Get Vaccinated](#) system. If you have difficulty accessing online booking, please call 1-833-838-2323.

Please note that pediatric, third, and booster doses may be by appointment only, not walk-ins. Please see the [Northern Health COVID-19 immunization clinic page](#) for more information for your community.

COVID-19 vaccines in BC pharmacies

BC's community pharmacies will play a major role in delivering (mRNA) COVID-19 vaccinations to eligible British Columbians. As of December 14, 2021, community pharmacies in 80 communities are taking appointments for individuals 12 and older. These vaccinations will be by appointment only. Register and book through the province's [Get Vaccinated system](#).

Pharmacies are not providing COVID-19 vaccinations to children ages 5 to 11. For more information, visit the Province of BC's [website](#).

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 December 24*, **18,462** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **236**
- New cases: **66**
- Currently in hospital: **8**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **6**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **274**

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.

*42 new cases reported on the [BC Pandemic Report](#) from December 28 (more information coming December 29, please connect with the [BC Ministry of Health newsfeed](#) and [BC COVID-19 Dashboard](#) for up to date, detailed information).

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](#) – December 28, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – December 22, 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

The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction Issues of Substance Conference and resource links

CCSA Conference Presentations

The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) hosted their Issues of Substance conference recently. The Conference highlights new research and best practices related to substance use, addiction, harm reduction, and treatment. BCCDC's harm reduction team presented 10 abstracts and posters, including:

- [Substances as Social Lubricants: Understand 'Party and Play'](#)
- [Exploring the Communication of Drug Alerts in BC](#)
- [Safety Beliefs and Behaviours](#)
- [Motivations for Concurrent Use of Uppers and Downers](#)
- See full conference program [here](#).

Organizational news

Order of Canada award recognizes Dr. Margo Greenwood's lifetime commitment to transforming the health and well-being of Indigenous children and families

Dr. Margo Greenwood, an Indigenous scholar of Cree ancestry, has worked for over 30 years to transform the health and well-being of Indigenous children, families, and communities. Her work creates a more just and equitable Canada.

Dr. Greenwood is now being recognized with one of the highest honours in the land.

On December 29, 2021, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, announced the appointment of Dr. Margo Greenwood as an Officer of the Order of Canada (O.C.). This award acknowledges Dr. Greenwood's outstanding leadership and contributions to society.

Dr. Greenwood is the Academic Leader of the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health, housed at the University of Northern British Columbia. She is a Professor in UNBC's First Nations Studies and Education programs. Dr. Greenwood has served as Vice President of Indigenous Health, Northern Health since 2013. For 15 years, she has contributed to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Dr. Greenwood was Advisory Board Chair for the Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health from 2006-2013. She is currently a member of the Institute of Population and Public Health Advisory Board.

Cultural Safety and Humility technical committee reviewing feedback from across Canada

[Health Standards Organization \(HSO\)](#) has received over 1,100 comments from 155 individuals and organizations on the draft *British Columbia (B.C.) First Nations, Métis and Inuit Cultural Safety and Humility* standard (HSO 75000:2021 E Cultural Safety and Humility BC).

The development of this standard was driven by a First Nations-led technical committee and supported by the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), with additional input from Métis Nation BC.

It aims to help create a culturally safe environment in the health system, encourage health care providers to provide care with humility, and end Indigenous-specific racism.

The final standard, which will be published in 2022, will be a guiding resource that supports systems and organizations in addressing Indigenous-specific racism and building an accessible, respectful and culturally safe environment for Indigenous people as they interact with the health system.

To continue reading, please visit the [First Nations Health Authority website](#).

12 Things to Know this Holiday Season

Thank you for all that you've done to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our province. By following the [Public Health Orders](#) and [getting vaccinated](#) against COVID-19, you're doing your part to help keep yourself, your family and your community safe and protected.

Please visit the [Northern Health Stories site](#) for all 12 tips and reminders for enjoying your holidays (including New Year's celebrations), while staying safe and healthy!