



# COVID-19 UPDATE

---

**Thursday, May 14, 2020**

**Note:** Please share any information in this update that you feel would be appropriate.

## Provincial case counts and statement

- **As of May 13, 2020**, there were **57** confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Northern Health region.
- **Province of BC statistics:**
  - Confirmed cases: **2,376** (**16** new)
  - Active cases: **385**
  - Deaths: **132** (**1** new)
  - In hospital: **59** (**14** in ICU)
  - Recovered: **1,859**
- [Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response](#) – May 13, 2020

## Dashboard provides detailed look at BC data

For data broken down by health authority, see the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#) (may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested)

## National Nursing Week: A message from Northern Health CEO Cathy Ulrich

During these difficult times, I want to recognize all support staff, clinical staff, facilities staff, administrative staff, and physicians for their response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The World Health Organization has recognized 2020 as the [Year of the Nurse and the Midwife](#). 2020 also marks the bicentenary of the birth of Florence Nightingale – someone who dedicated her life to the practice of nursing and to improving health care.

In Canada, May 11 to 17 is designated as [National Nursing Week](#). The theme this year is Nurses: A Voice to Lead – Nursing the World to Health, in recognition of the contributions nurses make to health and wellbeing, and enabling people to overcome health challenges.

2020 has brought unprecedented health challenges to the global community in the form of a COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a sequence of actions that have impacted all aspects of our lives. This pandemic has profiled the vital importance of nursing practice, whether in long-term care facilities, community settings, and acute care facilities, or in nursing education, nursing administration, and nursing research.

Each day before the pandemic and throughout it, nurses across the North have provided compassionate care and services to people and their families. As the pandemic has unfolded, I have been heartened to hear the many stories about how nurses and their health care colleagues have responded to the needs of people with courage, innovation, and compassion.

Over this Nursing Week, I encourage you to find a nurse and hear their story (perhaps virtually) – about why this is their chosen career. I suspect you will be impressed and encouraged!

On behalf of Northern Health, thank you to the nurses across Northern Health for their commitment to the profession of nursing and to serving the people of Northern BC.

-- *Cathy Ulrich,*  
*President and CEO, Northern Health*

## **WorkSafe BC: Tools for a safe restart**

The Province of BC recently announced [BC's Restart Plan](#), an outline for a gradual return to a new normal. WorksafeBC has been given the responsibility to develop the framework around this plan. A new WorkSafe BC page gives employers information and resources to help minimize the risks of exposure to the coronavirus at their workplaces: [COVID-19 and returning to safe operation](#).

## **Your story, our future: Take BC's COVID-19 survey**

*From the provincial government*

"BC COVID-19 SPEAK: Your story, our future" is a population health survey to understand citizen experiences, knowledge and actions during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was launched on Tuesday, May 12.

**Join the 75,000+ British Columbians who have already responded -- take the survey now:** [www.bccdc.ca/covid19survey](http://www.bccdc.ca/covid19survey)

About the survey:

- Open to all British Columbians 18 years of age and older.
- Takes 10-15 minutes and can be done on any tablet, computer or mobile device.
- Open until May 31.
- Available in English and Chinese, as well as a Punjabi survey translation guide.

This survey is the first of several activities that will strengthen our pandemic response and our understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 to date (social, economic, mental wellness and community wellness).

For more information about the survey, visit <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-survey>

## New resource on child and youth mental health and substance use

A new NH resource document gives youth and families clarity and direction on where to seek help for mental health and substance use challenges: [Child & Youth Mental Health and Substance Use Resources for Families](#). Northerners are encouraged to be aware that there is help available during these difficult times; they shouldn't hesitate to reach out for themselves or on behalf of a loved one.

Ahead of [BC Family Doctor Day](#) on May 19, the BC College of Family Physicians is celebrating the amazing work of our 6,000+ family physicians in BC and the unique role of family medicine in our health care system.

## Dr. Kalen Geddes wins “My Family Doctor” award

from the [BC College of Family Physicians](#)

Ahead of [BC Family Doctor Day](#) on May 19, the BC College of Family Physicians is celebrating the amazing work of our 6,000+ family physicians in BC and the unique role of family medicine in our health care system.

As part of our celebrations, we are pleased to announce the [recipients of the 2020 BCCFP peer- and patient-nominated awards](#).

In the Northern Health region, **Dr. Kalen Geddes** is the recipient of a patient-nominated “My Family Doctor” award.

Dr. Kalen Geddes is a family physician practising in Prince George. He has an interest in primary care obstetrics and practises as a hospitalist and medical assistance in dying (MAID) provider.

In addition to his family practice, Dr. Geddes works out of the youth primary care clinic and gender-affirming care clinic at Foundry Prince George. He is a clinical instructor for the Northern Medical Program and UBC residency programs.

Dr. Geddes values the longitudinal continuity of care from birth to death that he is able to provide through family medicine, as well as the variety of practice opportunities family medicine offers.

Dr. Geddes's nominator says, “He cared enough to change my husband's quality of life, not just quantity of life, because he really cared. He talked to us and took time with us to find a balance that we both agreed on. He went out of his way to research questions we asked and

helped us make life-changing decisions that we could both manage and still maintain. We weren't just a number on a chart that you should reach. He put us through a lot of changes before we found something that worked, but he did find it and we are so grateful that he cares about his patients. He means everything to us."

Please join us in celebrating Dr. Geddes. [Read more about all the award recipients here.](#)

## Northern Health's COVID-19 Guide for communities

Northern Health's printable booklet [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): A Northern Health Guide for Your Community](#) contains all the information you need to help keep your community safe and well informed.

We regularly update the guide online; however, there are no new changes this week.

## Updated guidelines on in-house testing

Effective immediately, in-house testing will be extended to:

- **LTC** – Symptomatic residents of long-term care facilities
- **OBK** – Symptomatic residents or staff of long-term care facilities that are under outbreak investigations
- **Request of public health/MHO**
- **Remote First Nations communities (test only if symptomatic):**
  - Communities in the Fort St. James area: Takla Lake, Yekooche, Tl'azt'en, Nak'azd'li
  - Communities in the Finlay Hub area: Kwadacha and Tsay Keh Dene
  - Fort Nelson
  - Coastal Tsimshian communities: Gitgaat, Kitkatla, Lax Kwalaams, and Metlakatla
  - Tahltan (Telegraph Creek) and Iskut
  - Mark requisitions with this code: **FN-COMM**

For details, see the [full memo](#).

## ----- PREVIOUS ISSUE -----

## BC's restart plan announced

The provincial government has released BC's Restart Plan, which lays out the steps we will take together to ensure we're all still protected as we get back to work and start expanding our social circles again.

Whether you operate a restaurant, a hair salon, a campground, or any other business; whether you want to know how schools will open; whether you want to see if you can visit family in the

next province, make sure you review the updates from the Province and see how you, your family, or your business are affected!

Learn more about BC's Restart Plan: [www.gov.bc.ca/restartBC](http://www.gov.bc.ca/restartBC)

## Northern Health Online Clinic & Information Line: Hours changing

Effective today (Thursday, May 7), the NH COVID-19 Online Clinic and Information Line will be changing its hours:

- Monday – Friday: 7 am - 10 pm
- Saturday, Sunday, and statutory holidays: 8 am - 8 pm
- **Note:** Health-care providers' hours changed to 8 am - 8 pm as of May 1

## New COVID-19 issue of Healthier Northern Communities E-Brief

As the North responds and adjusts to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Northern Health's Population and Preventive Public Health Program has adapted the [Healthier Northern Communities E-Brief](#) to share ideas from our local communities, and resources from around the world.

This month, you'll see two new sections. The first profiles stories of small and/or northern communities that are highlighting their innovation and resilience to respond to challenges, particularly amongst vulnerable populations. A later section summarizes opportunities for you and your organizations to share experiences, ideas and feedback with decision-makers and researchers about how COVID-19 is affecting you.

## Guidelines on COVID-19 in-house testing

Due to the ongoing limited supply of COVID-19 test kits, effective immediately, in-house testing will be restricted to the following groups:

- HOSP:
  - Hospital (Inpatient)
  - Emergency Department (**with intent to admit**)
  - Symptomatic pregnant women in their 3rd trimester
  - Renal patients
  - Cancer patients receiving treatment
  - Other immunocompromised patients

Other urgent requests for testing can be discussed with a pathologist on a case-by-case basis. We hope to expand testing if the supply of test kits increases. Retesting and samples that are not tested in-house will continue to be tested at Lifelabs. For complete guidelines, see the [full memo](#).

## Trusted links and resources

- [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** or to **report concerns about compliance with public health orders**, 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 webpage on current health topics](#).