

INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
September 17, 2020

NH Online COVID-19 Clinic and Information line - Update

Northern Health's Online COVID-19 Clinic and Information Line has experienced a significant increase in call volumes in recent weeks, leading to an increase in wait times for assessment and information.

We are working to increase the size of the Clinic staffing pool, in order to increase call capacity and hours of operation, and to reduce current wait times for assessment.

Callers to the online clinic who are seeking assessment and referral for testing, as well as general information, have a few options, including waiting on the line for the next available nurse, or phoning back at another time.

We strongly encourage Northern BC residents who have a primary care provider, to contact their family doctor or nurse practitioner as a first step for assessment for testing, whenever possible. Primary care providers may be able to offer a virtual appointment to support COVID-19 and other health care needs. BC also has a [Self-Assessment tool](#), if you are unsure whether to seek medical care or get tested.

Callers looking for general COVID-19 health information are encouraged to visit the [Northern Health](#) and [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) websites, for answers to their questions.

If you are experiencing potential COVID-19 symptoms, we continue to ask that you self-isolate, and contact your primary care provider or the Online Clinic; **please do not head to a testing centre without an assessment and referral/appointment.** This is for the protection of staff and other patients at COVID-19 test collection centres, and to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

We recognize that waits for testing and results can be frustrating, but it is very important to stay away from others when you may be infectious to others.

Following your test, there are a number of ways to get your negative results including online, by phone, or by text. Visit the BCCDC [web page on Test Results](#), for more information.

The NH Online Clinic and Info Line is staffed by a pool of NH staff, nurses, physicians and nurse practitioners. Current hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 10 am to 6 pm; Saturday, Sunday, and statutory holidays, 10 am - 2 pm.

We greatly appreciate your patience while this work is underway to reduce current wait times for assessment.

Media Contact: NH media line – 877-961-7724