

# Bulletin #106: COVID-19 Information

## January 15, 2021



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### COVID-19 Bulletin

#### [Horizon email recommended to sign up for COVID-19 vaccination clinics](#)

Further to what was shared in yesterday's [Special Bulletin](#), we want to encourage Horizon employees and physicians to use their Horizon email address. This ensures you won't miss the opportunity to receive a COVID-19 vaccine invitation, and other important communications.

Your Horizon email address is recommended as the most secure and simple way to receive your invitation and to RSVP to schedule your vaccination appointment.

If you are unable to access your Horizon email account, please contact the IT Service Desk by calling 1-844-354-4357 or emailing [Service@SNB.ca](mailto:Service@SNB.ca).

Once your email is accessible, please check your email – and junk folder – frequently to ensure you aren't missing your invitation from Employee Health.

**Please note:** Employees who have a GNB email address do **not** need to create a Horizon email address. If you have already supplied an alternate email and have been booked, you do not need to change your current process.

#### [Mental health supports](#)

The increasing number of COVID-19 positive cases across New Brunswick and Orange level status may be weighing heavily on your minds.

While anxiety is a normal reaction to the pandemic as people worry about their health, and the health of their loved ones, too much anxiety can start to cause harm at home and at work.

Feeling stressed and fearful every day takes a toll on our health and well-being very quickly. Anxiety can be problematic when

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it becomes persistent or impairs day-to-day tasks, rational decision-making, and / or maintaining healthy relationships.

### Understanding anxiety and its impacts

Emotionally you feel:

- Fearful
- Depressed
- Guilt
- Anger
- Heroic, euphoric, or invulnerable
- Apathetic

At work, you may:

- Have trouble remembering things
- Feel confused
- Have trouble thinking clearly and concentrating
- Have difficulty making decisions

Overall, anxiety may cause you to experience:

- An increase or decrease in your energy and activity levels
- An increase in irritability
- Difficulty relaxing or sleeping
- Resentment toward others
- Difficulty communicating and/or listening
- An inability to find humour or have fun

Here are some tips to help you cope with anxiety and help you minimize or ease stress and tension during this difficult time:



1. **Limiting exposure to news and social media.** When staying informed, stick to trusted, verified news sources such as [HorizonNB.ca](https://www.horizonnb.ca), [GNB.ca/coronavirus](https://www.gnb.ca/coronavirus), and [Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus)
2. **Take care of your body.** Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.
3. **Identify what is within your control.** Try to direct your energy towards what most worries you within your own control.
4. **Inform yourself and take precautions.** Once you've determined what the recommended precautions are, incorporate them into your regular routine. Right now, the recommendations are: wear a mask, wash your hands regularly with soap and water; stay home if you feel sick; avoid those who are sick; practice the two-metre physical distancing guidelines.
5. **Stay connected in new ways.** Having a support network of people to talk to when you're feeling anxious can help to keep you grounded and remind you to keep the perspective you need. Use social media, telephone, texts, and email.
6. **Make time to unwind.** Try to do some other activities you enjoy and that were part of your regular routine, as appropriate.

There are several tools that may help you and your family navigate through these turbulent times.

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The [Canadian Mental Health Association New Brunswick](#) contains multiple resources for mental well being including information about pandemic-related anxiety, and tools such as webinars, tips, and workshops.

Horizon's [Employee Health and Wellness page](#) on Skyline also contains many supportive resources, including information about Horizon's Employee and Family Assistance Program provider [Homewood Health](#), which is a leader in mental health resources for employers and employees.

Homewood Health has a dedicated [COVID-19 section](#) where you will find:

- Articles on how to maintain some sense of normalcy during the pandemic
- Practical tips and programs on anxiety and depression
- And more!

In addition to Homewood Health, the Government of Canada introduced a free program for all Canadians in March 2020:

- A toll-free 24/7 crisis hotline is available at 1-844-751-2133. Individuals will receive crisis counselling support and/or referral to community resources.
- A global mental health support program called [Wellness Together Canada](#). It consists of free online resources, tools, apps, as well as connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals.



### ID-IPC: Revised OR pathways for Orange and Red phases

The OR Decision Pathway for the Orange and Red Phases have been revised to include the directive that prior to any surgery, pre-operative testing for COVID-19 should occur for patients who live in orange or red zones, as per [Memo #45 \(issued November 26/20\)](#).

Revisions made to the OR Decision Pathways for facilities in an [Orange](#) or [Red](#) Phase include the following:

- COVID-19 testing criteria was changed to: "Obtain COVID-19 swab for patients who meet the following testing criteria: Those who live in Orange or Red zones, those who are symptomatic, those with close contact with a known case/travel from a higher risk area, and/or those from a facility cluster.
- Reference to high-risk procedures (surgeries entering the respiratory system from sinus to diaphragm) for preoperative COVID-19 testing has been removed as per Memo #45, prior to any surgery, pre-operative testing for COVID-19 should occur for patients who live in orange or red zones.
- Increased emphasis on "risk factors on the day of surgery" will assist with decision making when a negative COVID-19 rapid test is obtained on the day of surgery. If negative, this allows more surgeries to be performed in regular OR theatres as opposed to COVID-19 OR theatres.

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Please visit the [IPC Resources COVID-19 Skyline Page](#) for COVID-19 information.



### GNB Updates

Public Health reported 25 new cases of COVID-19 today.

There are four new cases in Zone 1 (Moncton region), five cases in Zone 2 (Saint John region), five cases in Zone 3 (Fredericton region), six cases in Zone 4 (Edmundston region), four cases in Zone 5 (Campbellton region), and one case in Zone 6 (Bathurst region).

### ID-IPC: SOP Compassionate visitation

A [Standardized Operations Procedure](#) (SOP) outlining the process for compassionate visitation for persons coming from outside of NB or a higher risk area, and who are unable to self-isolate for 14 days prior to the visit has been developed. This SOP ensures a consistent and safe approach for compassionate visitation to occur with end of life and/or critically ill patients.

The required process involves the individual requesting the compassionate visit to obtain approval to enter the province and to submit a request to the facility Executive director or designate to obtain permission to visit Horizon facility. The COVID-19 testing criteria and IPC requirements are listed. The roles of the Executive Director or Designate and the Healthcare team are included.

Please refer to the [Compassionate Visitation for Persons Coming from outside of New Brunswick or a Higher Risk Area](#) SOP for further detail.

Please visit the [IPC Resources COVID-19 Skyline Page](#) for COVID-19 information.