

Bulletin #191: COVID-19 Information

Jan. 20, 2022



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Our goal is to provide you with access to information that will assist you in navigating the COVID-19 pandemic and keep you safe and well. Please be advised of the following updates.

Employee Health Resource Pages

The following resources are available through our [Employee Health COVID-19 Skyline page](#).

1. [NEW Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Resource Page](#) – this includes answers to questions about mask & eye protection use.
2. [Outbreak & Exposure Management Resource Page](#) – this includes answers to questions about what to

expect if there is an exposure or outbreak in your area of work.

3. [Testing & Isolation Resource Page](#) – this includes answers to questions about isolation strategies and testing access.
4. [Travel Guidelines Resource Page](#) – this includes answers to questions about travel notification process & travel testing requirements.
5. [Vaccine Policy Resource Page](#) – this includes answers to questions about vaccine requirements & processes.

Updated Scenario Guidelines

NEW Updates have been made to two scenario guidelines — contingency and crisis, specifically, on scenario #4 regarding a HCW who is positive for COVID-19 and POCT testing requirements. Please visit the [Testing & Isolation Resource Page](#) on Skyline for the latest versions.

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Point of Care Tests (POCT) Storage Reminder

Please store your POCT at room temperature to ensure that tests are accurate when taken. Storing in freezing temperatures, such as your car, will impact the accuracy of the test and is NOT recommended.

POCT Distribution

We are pleased to share that all Horizon employees, students, volunteers, and physicians (with some exceptions) are eligible for an 8-week supply of point of care tests (POCT).

Starting Wednesday, Jan. 19 orders will be placed by managers and Medical Staff Offices through Meditech to secure POCT kits for all eligible employees.

POCT should be completed **three times per week on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday.**

Please ensure you store your POCT kits in a **room temperature location**. POCT results will not be accurate if stored in cold temperatures, such as in your vehicle.

Non-Eligible Employees:

The below list of employees are not currently eligible to receive the 8-week supply of POCT kits:

- Employees currently working from home, will become eligible upon return to work
- Employees currently on long term leave
- Employees currently on vaccine leave



Please contact your manager or Medical Staff Office for any questions and continue to monitor and follow Employee Health guidelines. Updated information can be found [HERE](#).

Pop-up Testing Clinics for Outbreak and Exposure, Asymptomatic Employees

Reminder! COVID-19 testing is available to staff and physician on-site at three Horizon hospitals.

Who is this for?

Any employee from an exposure or outbreak unit requiring day 5 or 10 testing or asymptomatic staff who wish to be tested or are directed to be tested.

Employees who are at home with symptoms, have positive POCT results or who are a close contact of a positive case should access testing through GNB's [online request form](#), from which they will be referred to their local COVID-19 assessment centre. These employees should **NOT** come into the facility to access testing.

What do you need to bring?

No appointment required. Please bring your **Medicare card**.

When and where are these clinics?

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| | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Fredericton | Daily (including weekends), 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. | CHAT Theatre, DECRH |
| Saint John | Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. | 5DS Classroom, SJRH |
| Moncton | Daily (including weekends), 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. | 5400, TMH |

Horizon is looking for cleaning staff to join its team in Saint John Area

The following PSA was previously shared with Saint John area media

(SAINT JOHN) Monday, January 17, 2022 – Horizon’s Environmental Services (EVS) team is looking for cleaning staff in facilities across the province, and the SAINT JOHN AREA has the most immediate need.

The EVS team works behind the scenes, around the clock, cleaning and disinfecting Horizon facilities to create a clean and safe health care environment for patients, staff and visitors.

During this fifth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, their role is more important than ever.

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Horizon is asking anyone who is looking for a job and is interested in contributing to the health and safety of staff, patients and families during the COVID-19 pandemic, to apply now.

To apply to be part of this important team, send an email to HorizonRedeploymentCenter@HorizonNB.ca with “EVS Opportunity” in the subject line, and we’ll get back to you with the details.

GNB: Vaccination training for chiropractors, dentists and veterinarians

As a result of increasing cases due to Omicron, and the expansion of vaccine eligibility, the Department of Health has engaged various allied health providers who have not historically been involved in vaccination campaigns to solicit their interest and support in helping augment the immunizer capacity in the province.

Chiropractors, dentists and veterinarians have been determined to be able to vaccinate in RHA clinics, with some additional training provided by the Regional Public Health Authorities. We have confirmed that chiropractors, dentists and veterinarians would be covered under current RHA liability insurance. Specifically:

- As long as the RHA approves and endorses the activity (i.e. immunizing by the above listed providers in this case), on their facilities (RHA clinics), their insurance

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would be extended.

- The RHA plan has covered students, volunteers, medical staff who are not employees of the RHAs, etc., as long as they are fulfilling a role and function requested, approved and endorsed by the RHA (protection against acts, errors and omissions), which is the case here.
- They would be covered as they would be providing an RHA-requested service at an RHA facility.
- In addition, the chiropractors, dentists and veterinarians would have met the competencies to administer vaccines, as per the SOPs provided by Public Health under the medical directive.

Prior to being employed as immunizers, individuals will be required to complete the required training as per New Brunswick's Standard Operational Procedure: Completion of Immunization Competency Training for Covid-19 Vaccines which outlines the process to ensure safe and competent immunization practices indicated in the Medical Directives for the Provision of COVID-19 vaccines are met. Education costs to fulfill the requirements to meet NB competencies will be covered upon being hired. The Department of Health will cover these costs.

In addition, chiropractors, dentists and veterinarians providing immunizations would be eligible to be paid the general sessional rate (currently \$142.80 per hour). This would be paid by the RHAs but reimbursed by the Department of Health for hours worked. The reimbursement for costs incurred in the hiring of dentists, chiropractors and veterinarians will be paid



in the same manner as other “non-Medicare” COVID costs that RHAs have incurred and will be included in the year-end settlement.

GNB Reminder: Record Priority group Details on PCR Test Requisition

In follow up to the memo dated January 7, 2022 from Dr. Cristin Muecke regarding “Revised New Testing, isolation and contact management strategy moving forward – 5th Wave,” this is a reminder to those who are requesting PCR tests for those in the priority testing group to be sure to indicate “yes” in the Sentinel Site box, and to provide the priority group on the PCR requisition. By doing so, Public Health will follow up if these tests are positive. Please [click](#) here to view a requisition form highlighting the area being referred to.

GNB: COVID-19 Vaccine Immunizer Competency

Public Health New Brunswick would like to remind all COVID-19 vaccine immunizers of the competencies required to administer COVID-19 vaccines.

The New Brunswick Immunization Program Guide (NBIPG) provides direction to all health and allied health care practitioners who provide publicly funded vaccines including COVID-19 vaccines. The [Standard Operational Procedure: Completion of Immunization Competency Training for Covid-19 Vaccines](#) has been developed to assist immunizers in determining the specific requirements applicable to COVID.

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Immunizers are expected to ensure that where necessary, they obtain and maintain immunization skills as outlined in the standard operating procedures mentioned above and below:

- Please note that all immunizers are required to practice as per their specific profession's regulatory standards.
- It is the employers' responsibility to ensure and monitor employees' competency levels. This includes ensuring they have access to time and resources to complete any training.
- [The New-Brunswick COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Guide for Immunizers](#) is to be used in conjunction with the [New Brunswick Program Immunization Guidelines \(NBPIG\)](#) and the [Canadian Immunization Guide \(CIG\)](#) including the *new* chapter on COVID-19 Vaccines.

The New-Brunswick Department of Health will continue to cover the costs of the Education Program Immunization Competencies (EPIC) vaccine education modules (\$200 fee). Each organization can therefore reimburse or cover the costs of the training for their employees/volunteers. The Department of Health will reimburse each organization for these training costs.

Process to follow for reimbursement:

1. Regional Health Authorities (Horizon Vitalité), and EM/ANB, follow usual Budget amendment processes for reimbursement processes and have your Finance teams reach out to their Department of Health Financial Services contacts for guidance if required.



2. Long-term care facilities licensed by Social Development are to submit invoices directly to the Department of Social Development for reimbursement.
3. Other Health and Allied Health Care Professionals not mentioned here are to submit invoices to their employer.

GNB: Temporary change in eligibility criteria for government coverage of prescription renewal services by pharmacists for patients due to Omicron

Since October 2021, pharmacists have been able to renew prescriptions for eligible New Brunswick residents with no service fee if they do not have a primary care physician or nurse practitioner or are in an urgent situation where they cannot get a prescription renewed by their primary care physician or nurse practitioner.

In an effort to improve access to primary care during this fifth wave of COVID, effective January 20, 2022, we are temporarily removing the "urgent" criteria from the eligibility for the claims for pharmacist prescription renewals. Service fees for prescription renewals by pharmacists will be covered by the Department of Health for patients who have a primary care physician or nurse practitioner and who require a prescription renewal for continuity of care, regardless of urgency.

More information for providers can be found [here](#), and information for patients can be found [here](#).

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GNB: Admissions and transfers in Nursing Homes

This memo is to address the questions regarding prioritizing admissions to Nursing Homes.

At this time, there is no directive from the Department to admit exclusively from the hospitals as we realise that such measures may inadvertently put individuals who are in community awaiting nursing home beds at risk of hospitalization.

However, we ask that you continue with admissions, unless otherwise directed by Public Health, but put all transfers from one nursing home to another (when both provide equal level of care) temporarily on hold until further notice.

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