

GOVERNMENT OF NEW BRUNSWICK UPDATE
Bulletin #29d: COVID-19 GNB News Release from April 23
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The following update on COVID-19 (the novel coronavirus) was issued April 23:

Removal of the 30-day limit on prescription drugs; no new cases today

FREDERICTON (GNB) – Public Health reported no new cases of COVID-19 today.

The number of confirmed cases in New Brunswick is 118 and the number of active cases is 14. To date, 104 people have recovered. There are five patients hospitalized, including one patient in an intensive care unit.

The latest updates and information on confirmed COVID-19 cases and laboratory testing in New Brunswick [are available online](#).

Dr. Jennifer Russell, chief medical officer of health, thanked New Brunswickers for their continued adherence to physical distancing and other practices that have slowed the spread of the COVID-19 virus. She said it is important that these practices continue as elements of the “new normal” when restrictions now in place are gradually loosened.

“My advice to New Brunswickers has been clear and consistent since the pandemic began and it will not change in the weeks ahead,” said Russell. “Let’s not lose the advantage we have built over the last six weeks.”

Recovery plan on the way

Premier Blaine Higgs said the provincial government will present a recovery plan in the coming days.

“Recovery is not as easy as flipping a light switch,” said Higgs. “We have to be strategic and make sure that the government, daycares, businesses, restaurants and shops can operate with the necessary precautions to ensure the health and safety of their employees and customers. I caution everyone that recovery comes with risks and we need to minimize those risks.”

Removal of the 30-day limit on prescription drugs

The 30-day limit on prescription drugs will be eliminated for drugs where shortages do not exist. In some cases, the limit had resulted in people paying additional dispensing fees and co-payments.

“We realize this is a difficult decision, but in light of the unprecedented circumstances we are in, we strongly believe this is the right one,” said Higgs. “We are taking this action to ensure that our vulnerable population is not put in a position where they have to choose among paying for their medication, buying groceries, or paying their rent.”

However, the government will create a working group which will identify those drugs which could experience a shortage and put in place a 30-day supply limitation if necessary in order to protect the supply.

Higgs praised pharmacists in the province for their co-operation and collaboration with this complex issue.

“During this difficult time, pharmacists have played an important role in our communities as essential front-line workers,” said Higgs. “Our government understands that pharmacists want to ensure residents have the medications they need. We share the same concerns and that is why we will create this working group to keep a close eye on the drug supply, and to identify any anticipated drug shortages.”

Up-to-date information about COVID-19 [is available online](#).