



**NORTHERN HEALTH  
CONNECTIONS**

## Northern Health Connections Annual Report 2018/2019



Northern Health Connections is a **travel service program for patients** needing to travel for out-of-town health care appointments in Northern B.C. and Vancouver.



**Worry-free  
travels**



**Relax and watch  
a movie**



**Safe travels for you  
and your family**

  
**northern health**  
*the northern way of caring*

OPERATED BY  
**DIVERSIFIED**  
TRANSPORTATION LTD.  
**safely**  
home

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# Northern Health Connections

## SUMMARY

Northern Health Connections is a health transportation service that was established in 2006. The routes and times have been designed to enable access to health services and medical appointments. This is a flexible service allowing for the routes and times to be shifted and redesigned as services are changed, added, and as physician/nurse practitioner referral patterns change.

The Northern Health Connections Service is heading into its 13<sup>th</sup> year in operation. Northern Health Connections continues to transport non-urgent health care passengers to their medical appointments, as well as provide seniors (60+) with low-cost transportation to various locations along our existing routes. All of the information on Northern Health Connections can be found at our website:

<https://nhconnections.ca>

### **2019 sees increase in ridership**

The Connections ridership continues to grow each year. This fiscal year Connections transported 16,968 passengers. This number is up from the previous year's total of 13,073 passengers - representing a 30% increase year over year. The overall ridership is up.

### **Rider eligibility criteria expanded**

To be eligible for the NH Connections program, patients must have a valid BC Services Card, not require care from a health professional (physician or nurse) during their trip and need to access a health service that is not available in their home community (such as cancer treatment, hemodialysis, specialist physician etc.) Appointments are verified. Other eligible patients are those who have been transported outside of their home community by BC Emergency Health Services (ambulance or medevac) and need return travel home.

Health Care Staff and Students (locums, nurses, physicians etc. can also access the service).

In July 2018, Northern Health Connections broadened the eligibility criteria to allow individuals 60 years and older to travel without having to attend a medical appointment. Of the total 16,968 passengers this year, 2,466 of those passengers belonged to this new "60+" category.

### **Advisory Committee**

We have recently created an Advisory Committee, which consists of the following:

North East Mayor, Dale Bumstead

North West Mayor, Gerry Thiessen

Fiona MacPherson, NHC Lead

Dean Wright, VP, Motorcoach at Pacific Western Group

Rosalind Layton, Operations Manager for NHC

Steve Raper, Chief, External Relations & Communications -Northern Health

Nicole Cross, Regional Director- First Nation Health Authority

The Advisory Committee has met three times for our first year and will continue to work with community leaders to improve the service. Our next meeting is September 25, 2019 at UBCM.

### **New coach bus added to the fleet**

We currently have (5) full size coaches and (6) mini buses. This year a brand new X345 Prevost Coach bus was added to the fleet. Safety continues to be the number one priority. By refreshing the fleet on an annual basis, a safe and reliable service can be maintained with minimized down time, while providing a pleasant and comfortable travel experience for all passengers. Below is a snapshot of our newest coach.



### **Plans for the Connections program in 2020**

As we enter 2020, Northern Health has ambitious plans for the Connections program. Key elements of the plans include:

- Helping more people get to their appointments by building new partnerships with user groups.
- Increasing awareness of our service and how to access it.
- Investigating how we can better assist families in addressing the critical barriers they face between home and hospital.
- Install Cameras and GPS in all our coaches to provide additional safety.

We passionately believe in, and want to deliver on our important mission of providing **better access and improved health in the North.**

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## MEET OUR DRIVERS

### Ron Kell



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Ron started his driving profession as a school bus driver in October 2003. He decided to join the Northern Health Connections team because he felt it would be both rewarding and challenging. Ron was accepted into the program in July 2006.

Ron is known for his infectious smile and upbeat “Hello!” He looks forward to getting you from point A to B, safely, and in good time.

### Terry Armstrong



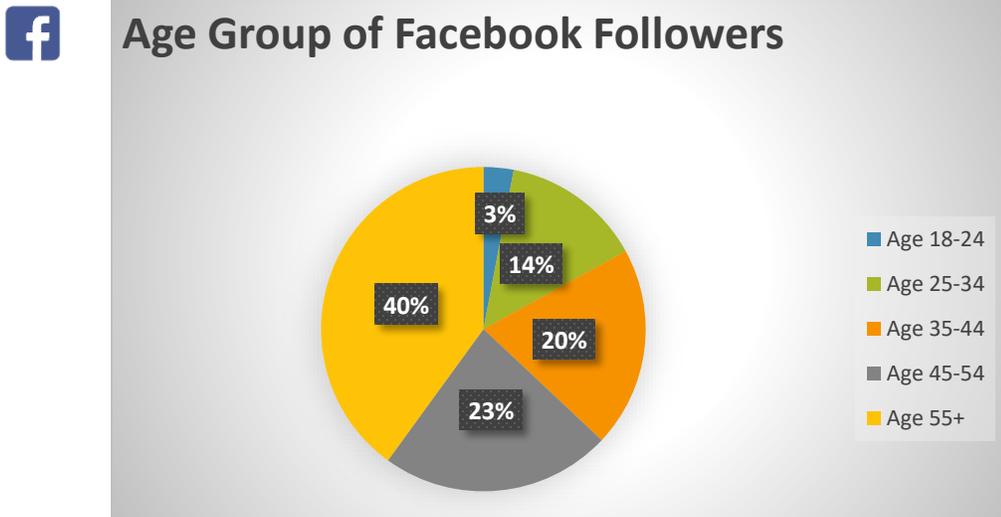
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Terri joined Northern Health Connections as a driver in November 2009. She was first introduced to NH Connections when she travelled as a companion passenger for a family member to a medical appointment. The services caught her eye and inspired her to pursue the job — the rest is history!

Terri loves the open road — be sure to chat with her along the way!

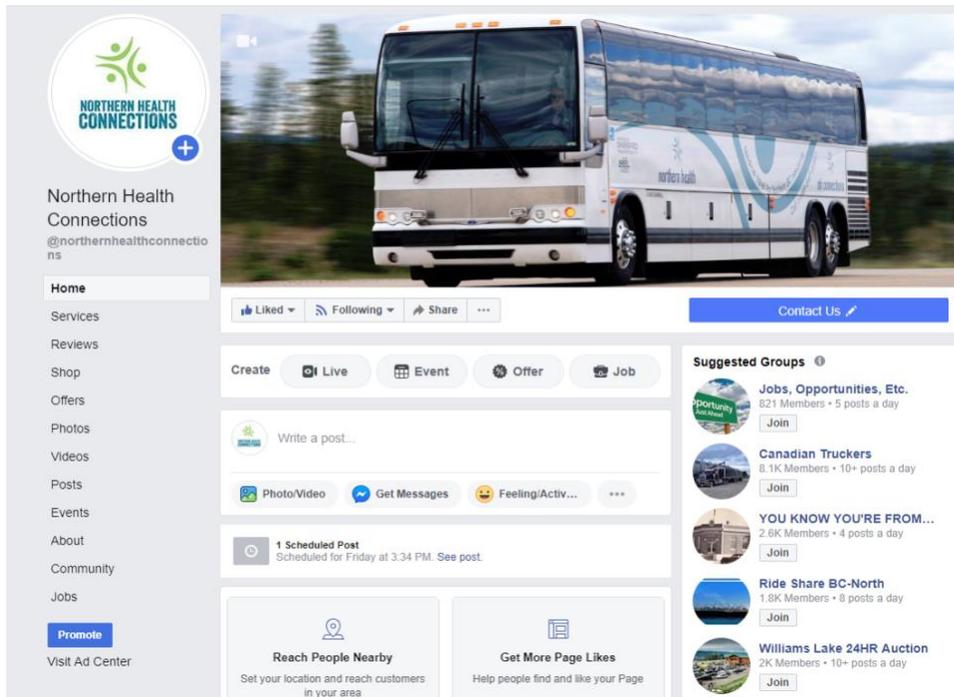
# OUR STATS

Northern Health Connections Facebook Page has 1,143 Followers. 83% - women and 17% men. Below is the age demographic:



## Testimonial from a senior utilizing the 60+ category

“I was pleasantly surprised to realize that I could take the bus all the way to Vancouver from Prince George for the low cost of \$20. I was even more surprised at how comfortable, clean smooth the ride was. My husband will be joining me on the next trip. Thank you Northern Health Connections!!!”  
Sincerely, Trudy



# Analytics Overview from our Northern Health Connections Website

## Overview

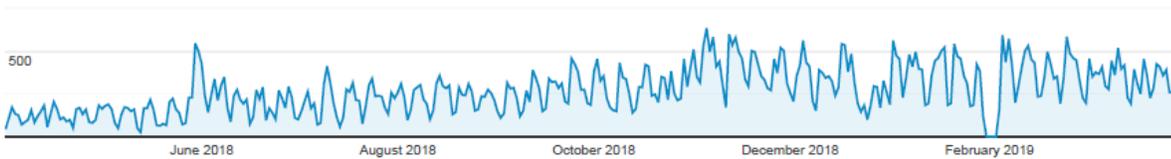
Apr 1, 2018 - Mar 31, 2019

All Users  
100.00% Pageviews

### Overview

#### Pageviews

1,000



Pageviews  
**99,362**



Unique Pageviews  
**71,859**



Avg. Time on Page  
**00:01:34**



Bounce Rate  
**46.53%**



% Exit  
**38.45%**



Page	Pageviews	% Pageviews
1. /Home.aspx	20,914	21.05%
2. /SchedulesandFares.aspx	18,639	18.76%
3. /bookatrip.aspx	7,166	7.21%
4. /	6,762	6.81%
5. /schedules-fares	5,335	5.37%
6. /BookaTrip.aspx	5,005	5.04%
7. /PassengerInformation.aspx	4,692	4.72%
8. /PassengerInformation/Eligibility.aspx	3,693	3.72%
9. /ContactUs.aspx	3,169	3.19%
10. /PassengerInformation/Accommodations.aspx	2,857	2.88%

**Annual Mileage for this fiscal year was 571,867 miles/920,331km in 988 annual trips.  
With an average of 19 trips per week.**



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## OUR SPONSORSHIPS, SUPPORTERS, AND PARTNERS



Ministry of Health



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness



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