

PROVINCIAL LABORATORY SERVICES

COMMUNIQUÉ

<http://www.healthpei.ca/micro>

TO: Island Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Woman's Wellness Clinics, Facility Administrators, COA's, Lab Managers, LTC, Inpatient Units

FROM: Dr. Greg German, Division Head of Microbiology Services
Dr. Kristen Mead, Medical Director Provincial Lab Services
Brian Timmons, Director Provincial Lab Services

DATE: December 15, 2020

RE: Step 3: Interim Practice Changes in Microbiology in Response to COVID-19 Workload

Please refer to step 1 ([July 17, 2020](#)) and step 2 ([Nov 3, 2020](#)) on clinical practice changes involving the Microbiology laboratory. Thank you to those that have contributed to wise testing so far.

Due to the unprecedented and unexpected demand of COVID-19 testing at a rate eight (8) times our daily capacity, we have to continue to respond to our testing challenges and make important changes.

Effective December 17, 2020 until further notice and potentially until the end of 2020 the following tests **will be cancelled** upon receipt to the laboratory with a note referring to this communique.

- Sputum samples
- Fungus cultures
- H. pylori testing
- Giardia/Cryptosporidium Testing
- Measles, Mumps and Varicella serology
- Enteric Viral panels – except ER, or facility residents or inpatients
- Urine cultures – unless documentation of one of the following: pyuria (Chemistry lab urinalysis confirmation), pregnancy, pre-surgical, nephrologist, or urology requests

Exceptions can be discussed PRIOR to specimen collection with the Microbiologist on Call for which we will have 24 hours coverage with either Dr. Gregory German or General Pathologist Dr. Pouya Sadeghi Aval. Exceptions can be on a case by case basis or could include adding other target groups or ordering providers.

Also yeast smears and throat swabs will be delayed as samples will be diverted across the Island to PCH laboratory.

Also, due to a lack of supplies locally and regionally chlamydia and gonorrhoea testing will have a prolonged delay before results are available. Such delays could last up to at least a month. Samples will be stored. Contact 902-894-2515 to expedite a request so as not to significantly affect patient care.

Across the country, including within our region testing is curtailed significantly to enable a robust response to the pandemic.

Thank you for your ongoing assistance with the care of our patients. Dr. German can be reached at 902-894-2515 or through QEH Switchboard 902-894-2111.