



Date: March 25, 2020
To: All Physicians
From: Alberta Public Laboratories
Re: Changes to Routine HBV, HCV and HIV Viral Load Testing and HSV/VZV Phoning

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Key Message:

- As a temporary action, viral load testing for HBV, HCV, and HIV will be decreased to two runs per week for non-transplant patients.
 - An increase of approximately 3 days in turn-around-time (TAT) will be noticed. TAT will increase from 7 days to 10 days.
- Positive HSV-1 and HSV-2 PCR results from swabs will no longer be called to the ordering provider.
 - Exception: infants <12 months and pregnant women.
- Positive VZV PCR results from swabs will no longer be called to the ordering provider.
 - Exception of hospitalized patients.
- Results will be available on NetCare in real-time, and all results will be sent to the ordering provider through routine reporting channels

Why this is important:

- The increased availability of electronic access to real-time results has decreased the need to call out positive results
- The increased level of testing volume due to COVID-19 has required prioritization of testing resources.

Action Required:

- To ensure a call-out on any positives for pregnant and post-partum women “pregnancy” must be listed in the clinical information section on the requisition
- Please keep new TATs in mind when planning patient test requests.
- Consult routine reporting channels and NetCare for real-time results.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

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