

<b>DATE:</b>	2022 April 4
<b>TO:</b>	North Zone Physicians, Nurses, Acute Care and Emergency Unit Locations
<b>FROM:</b>	Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
<b>RE:</b>	<b>Rapid COVID-19 testing of emergency department and hospital inpatients in Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Elk Point, St. Paul, Lac La Biche and Smoky Lake</b>

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### Key Message

- Effective **April 4, 2022**, COVID-19 testing on specimens submitted from emergency department (**ED**) and **hospital inpatients** in Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Elk Point, St. Paul, Lac La Biche and Smoky Lake will be tested at the Bonnyville Health Centre laboratory using the rapid GeneXpert® nucleic acid test (NAT).
- On site testing using the ID NOW is still available at Cold Lake, Elk Point, St. Paul, Lac La Biche and Smoky Lake acute care facilities according to previously defined criteria (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/lab/if-lab-hp-bulletin-new-test-criteria-and-locations-for-acute-care-on-site-id-now-covid-19-testing.pdf>)
- Samples negative by ID NOW will be referred for confirmation to Bonnyville as above. Please see the testing algorithm in the appendix.
  - Results will be available within 6 hours of receipt at the Bonnyville Health Centre laboratory.
  - Specimen transport frequency will remain unchanged.
  - Results turnaround times for confirmation testing are expected to improve.
- Acceptable specimens include throat or nasopharyngeal swabs (in Universal Transport Media or saline), nasopharyngeal aspirates, endotracheal tube aspirates, and bronchoalveolar lavages.

### Action Required

- No change or action is required.
- COVID-19 and other respiratory virus testing should continue to be ordered as VIROV1 in Meditech.
- All results from the Bonnyville Health Centre laboratory will be available in Netcare. Results will be viewable in the Aspen Regional Health Meditech ring.
- Positive results will continue to be called to the submitting location.
- Contact and droplet precautions should only be discontinued in accordance with Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidelines or consultation, and should take into account the patient's clinical and radiological findings.

### Inquiries and feedback may be directed to

- Lori Ray, Clinical Supervisor, APL, 780-201-3523, [lori.ray@aplabs.ca](mailto:lori.ray@aplabs.ca)
- Dr. Nathan Zelyas, Medical Microbiologist, APL – Public Health Laboratory, [nathan.zelyas@aplabs.ca](mailto:nathan.zelyas@aplabs.ca)
- Dr. Mireille Kattar, Regional Pathologist & Medical Microbiologist, APL – Edmonton and North Zone, [Mireille.kattar@aplabs.ca](mailto:Mireille.kattar@aplabs.ca)

### This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by

- Dr. Michael Mengel, North Sector Medical Director, APL Chair Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, University of Alberta



**Appendix:** Emergency department and hospital inpatient COVID-19 testing in Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Elk Point, St. Paul, Lac La Biche and Smoky Lake

