

DATE:	16 May 2024
TO:	William J. Cadzow - Lac La Biche Healthcare Centre Physicians, Nursing and Allied Healthcare Professionals
FROM:	Melanie Hehn, Manager North Central Zone
RE:	Classification of Transfusion Medicine Testing Services in the Lac La Biche Laboratory

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- Effective May 30, 2024, the William J. Cadzow - Lac La Biche Healthcare Centre Laboratory will no longer be performing Transfusion Medicine Testing, including Type and Screens and Crossmatches, and will be considered a non-testing/stock and dispense only site. All TM testing will be performed by the University of Alberta Hospital Transfusion Medicine Laboratory.

Background

- The Provincial Transfusion and Transplantation Medicine program is working to classify all facilities into specific categories based on several factors including average testing activity, current inventory levels, distance from a hub site, laboratory staff FTE and site clinical programs (with focus on traumas, vascular surgery, high risk obstetrics and oncology). Due to Medical Laboratory Technologist shortages in Lac La Biche, the decision has been made to transition the Lac La Biche facility to a non-testing/stock and dispense only classification. The University of Alberta Transfusion Medicine Laboratory will provide all testing support.

How this will impact you

- Type and Screen and Crossmatch testing will no longer be performed on site. Patients requiring routine/non urgent transfusions will have their Type and Screen collected and sent via routine courier to the University of Alberta Hospital. UAH Transfusion Medicine Laboratory staff will perform all testing and units will be crossmatched electronically or serologically as appropriate, to the inventory in LLB or transported via courier from UAH to LLB.
 - Urgent transfusion testing may be sent using a stat courier system. The need for urgent transfusion testing must be clearly communicated to the laboratory staff. Pathologists with expertise in transfusion medicine will continue to provide support 24/7.
- Uncrossmatched group O Red Blood Cells will be available on site for urgent transfusions in which a patient is unstable or symptomatic and bleeding. The lab will continue to store and issue fibrinogen and prothrombin complex concentrates for bleeding patients when clinically indicated.
 - NOTE: Historical checks will be performed before and after issuing red cells to determine if the patient has a history of antibodies or special transfusion requirements. The ordering physician will be notified if required.

Action Required

- Ensure all routine, urgent or stat transfusion requests are clearly communicated to the Lac La Biche laboratory staff so they can ensure the appropriate transport measures to and from the University of Alberta Hospital for the type and screen and crossmatched units are taken and units will be available.



- Ensure the Maternal Newborn Child and Youth Strategic Clinical Network (MNCY SCN) recommendations for type and screen orders in low-risk obstetrics are being applied.
- Ensure routine outpatient transfusions (including IVIG or other blood products) are ordered and the transfusion date is communicated to the Lac La Biche laboratory staff, so Lac La Biche lab staff can arrange to have the appropriate product available on site for the appointment.

Effective May 30, 2024

Questions/Concerns

- Allahna Elahie, Transfusion Medicine Safety Officer North Zone
- Melanie Hehn, Manager North Central Zone
- Tanya McKelvey, Manager Transfusion and Transplantation Medicine, North Sector
- Dr. Mireille Kattar, North Zone Consultant Pathologist
- Dr. Ghazala Radwi, Transfusion Medicine Medical Lead, North Sector

Approved by

- Dr. Susan Nahirniak, Medical Director, Provincial Transfusion and Transplantation Medicine

Effective September 1, 2023, APL has become the sole provider of all public lab services in Alberta. As a result, community lab services formally provided by DynaLIFE Medical Labs will become the responsibility of Alberta Precision Labs (APL). This change impacts all zones.