

DATE:	6 March 2024
TO:	Physicians, Nursing Staff and Healthcare Practitioners - All Zones
FROM:	Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
RE:	Connect Care Standing Order Management Update

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages

- It has been identified that some standing orders placed within Connect Care will not have sufficient instances to meet the intent of the ordering prescriber due to order cleanup activities or errors in release of orders.
- While we are working towards a paperless workflow, Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) requests that patients continue to bring their Connect Care paper requisitions to the laboratory to help identify which of the open Connect Care orders needs to be prioritized and collected.
- Patients may call clinics for new laboratory requisitions if their repeating orders have run out earlier than expected.
- Ordering providers are encouraged to review all Active Orders at every patient encounter and delete investigations they are responsible for which are no longer appropriate.
- Laboratory standing orders currently expire at 365 days from the date of original order not the last collection.

Background

- It has come to our attention that some instances of Connect Care standing orders have been released in duplicate resulting in patients returning to lab with no instances of their standing lab orders left for lab to activate (for example, patient has order for labs monthly for 12 instances, but has run out of orders at month 8).
- To prevent this from happening in the future, a Connect Care alert was put in place to prevent users from releasing an order multiple times in short order.
- Some patients have hundreds of open ambulatory lab orders in Connect Care. It is challenging for lab staff to identify which labs need to be collected on a given day or a future date.
- As per the January 22, 2024 APL bulletin [Laboratory Workflow to Address Multiple Orders in an Outpatient Setting](#), it is part of APL's workflow to view any open orders in Connect Care, in addition to those provided on paper requisitions. Any open orders without an expected date or those with expected dates in the past will be collected.
 - If those open orders were meant to be recurring orders with no dates (which can occur with manual rather than automatic default modes), those will be collected and there will be no subsequent open orders that were intended for future collections.
 - APL also consults with the patient, but if the patient does not know when lab order(s) should be collected, such orders will be collected.
- The paper requisition can assist with finding the correct Connect Care orders. However, if patients do not bring their paper requisition for Connect Care-entered orders, lab staff will attempt to find and collect these as well by consulting with the patient. There may be calls to the authorizing prescriber or their associated clinic for clarification of the order validity in some of these situations.



How this will impact you

- If your patients present with their paper requisition showing orders that should not yet be expired, lab staff will manually enter the ordered labs for a single instance. However, with this manual entry there are challenges with results routing to all the originally intended locations, so patients will be told to return to clinic to get new orders before their next scheduled lab appointment to ensure that routing accuracy is maintained.

Action Required

- While we are working towards a paperless workflow, APL requests that patients continue to bring their Connect Care paper requisitions to the laboratory to help identify which of the open Connect Care orders needs to be prioritized and collected.
- For One Time/Future Mode Orders:
 - Ensure that you complete the date of expected collection in all electronic orders and on any paper requisition. For electronic orders, if a date is not specified it will default to the date that the order was placed.
- For Standing Orders:
 - AUTOMATIC should be selected when there is a consistent set interval (e.g. every month).
 - The due date will be determined after the first time the patient attends lab based on the interval selected. This will allow laboratory staff to review expected dates for future lab appointments and select only tests required during that visit.
 - MANUAL should be selected for PRN type orders or for non-standard intervals.
 - No expected date will show to the lab. Lab will consult with the patient to determine which orders should be collected.
- Ordering providers are encouraged to review all Active Orders at every patient encounter and delete investigations that they or their programs are responsible for which are no longer necessary. This will help clean up the outstanding orders complicating collection. Tip sheets are in the process of being drafted and will be sent out by the CMIO at a future date to assist with this process.
- Ordering providers are encouraged to educate their patients on the urgency and recommended timing of ordered laboratory investigations.

Effective Immediately

Questions/Concerns/Approved by

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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.