

<b>DATE:</b>	26 October 2023
<b>TO:</b>	North & South Zones – Medical Staff, Nursing Staff and Allied Health
<b>FROM:</b>	Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
<b>RE:</b>	<b>Highlights of Laboratory Changes with Connect Care Launch 7</b>

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## PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

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### Key Message

- Part of the Connect Care transformation for health care delivery in Alberta is standardization of laboratory nomenclature, reporting and processes to support a single Electronic Medical Record (EMR). Similar to those prior to previous launches, this communication provides important information for some of the changes to laboratory processes. A list of changes is located within [Appendix A - Major Changes for Laboratory Medicine with Connect Care Fully Launched Sites \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#) which is also located on [Laboratory Services Calculators and Clinical Resources website](#). This document reflects changes for all sites live on Connect Care.
- As of November 5, 2023, all laboratory functions provided by Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) across the province of Alberta will be performed using new Connect Care laboratory systems.
- During the period of Nov 5<sup>th</sup> to Nov 19<sup>th</sup>, patience with the teams transitioning is requested.
- For the first several weeks post launch, we are requesting extra vigilance in ensuring tests have been ordered, interpreted and received appropriately.
- If at all possible in the clinical context, kindly encourage patients in these communities to access lab services after Nov 19<sup>th</sup> unless testing is of an urgent nature.
  - APL and DynaLIFE appointments can be booked [online](#) or by calling the province wide patient appointment line at 1-877-702-4486 for assistance.
- If you need the outpatient collection to have a specific collection window, please indicate an approximate Expected Date in the order and directly on the requisition. If the expected date has passed when the patient presents for collection, the lab will collect such orders. In situations where an outpatient presents with multiple requisitions with no explicit instructions, collection of all ordered tests will occur unless the patient indicates otherwise.

### Ordering laboratory testing

- If you are in an environment live with Connect Care (Epic):
  - Order using the electronic orders built into the system. Historical paper requisitions should not be used if Connect Care is available.
    - It is important to pay attention to the specimen source and collection timing details to ensure that the defaults are appropriate.
    - Complete the Epic collection process completely as per Specimen Collection Guide located on the Epic Learning Home Dashboard.
    - Orders that are placed as **stat** will have a stat collection but for tests that are not performed on site, the laboratory staff will follow the normal site send out and approval processes unless there is a specific request in the electronic order to send out as an urgent test.



- Please print the Connect Care laboratory orders as a requisition if your patient is to have the testing collected as an outpatient. If you need the outpatient collection to have a specific collection window, please enter an approximate Expected Date in the order. In situations where an outpatient presents with multiple requisitions with no explicit instructions, collection of all ordered tests will occur unless the patient indicates otherwise.
- If your patient will be having their testing collected as an outpatient at the lab, order as Lab to Collect **Future** or Lab to Collect **Standing**. The requisition will automatically print. Provide the requisition to your patient to present at the lab.
- If you are attempting to order an “add-on” test to a previously collected specimen, the system will only allow the electronic requests if the order is for an inpatient or a patient currently admitted to an emergency department. Add on orders are not possible through the system for outpatient scenarios or for any Transfusion Medicine Testing, regardless of patient admission status. However, if you are aware that an appropriate specimen exists and the option for electronic add-on is not available in Connect Care, there is a provincial [Lab Add-on/Order Modification requisition](#); located on the [AHS Forms & Requisition page](#) under Provincial Documents (All Zones).
- If you are in an AHS environment that will not be live with Connect Care on Nov 5<sup>th</sup>:
  - Continue to use your current ordering practice with the applicable requisitions or EMR
  - You may also print the requisition(s) from the requisition generator: [Requisitions | Alberta Precision Laboratories \(albertaprecisionlabs.ca\)](#)
  - **Please ensure that you are providing your Provider and Submitter IDs with the requests to allow the results to be returned appropriately.** [Community Providers: Take Action to Receive Lab, Microbiology and Pathology Results \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#)  
Use the [SER, DEP, and SUB Lookup: Read Me - AHS Tableau Server \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#)
- If you are a community provider:
  - **Please ensure that you are providing your Provider and Submitter IDs with the requests to ensure results to be returned appropriately.** [Community Clinics: Take Action to Receive Lab, Microbiology, Pathology & Imaging Results \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#)
  - Requisitions are available [Requisitions | Alberta Precision Laboratories \(albertaprecisionlabs.ca\)](#) and can be customized with your Connect Care identifiers. Many are also available in your EMR.
  - For authorized community providers (e.g. Midwives) in settings that do not use Connect Care needing to request plasma protein products / derivatives or order Transfusion Medicine testing (except prenatal investigations), please use [Transfusion Medicine Requisition \(Community\) \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#). All Community providers not on Connect Care should use Canadian Blood Services requisitions for prenatal testing ([Canadian Blood Services Requisitions and Forms](#)).
  - There are changes to how reports are delivered, especially when a report is copied to a community provider. If you are copied on a result, it will be sent to your AHS default reporting location. If you are unclear of your default location, please contact the Solution Centre Service Desk at [IT Service Desk & Solution Centre | Insite \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#) or by calling 1-877-311-4300.



## Test names

- Many test names have changed. Within Connect Care, the historical names have been added as synonyms. The Alberta Precision Laboratories [Test Directory and Collection Information Guide](#) (aka Guide to Lab Services) contains information with the legacy system names as well as the new Connect Care Terminology

## Specimen Source / Specimen Collection

- With the exception of cutover night and launch day, the routine collection times (aka morning collections, sweep times) are not changing. If you are needing to change a scheduled routine collection time, contact your local lab. The Epic default collection time is not a new sweep time.
- If the specimen source associated with the order is different from what will be used for collection (e.g. Central line venous blood vs. venous blood) the source must be changed in the order prior to the collection being performed.
- Rainbow draws – the practice of collecting a variety of tubes from a patient without direct or protocol based test orders is not supported. The “extra tube-XX” orders that are visible in the system were designed to allow collection of extra volume for the laboratory to complete a test that was already ordered and collected but has had insufficient volume to complete the investigation. They were not designed to function as draw and hold tube for future orders. Any tubes submitted without an associated test order will be discarded. See bulletin [Rainbow Draws for Laboratory Testing \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#)

## Critical Test Results

- Any results that meet our critical notification criteria (see appendix A) will be called to the patient location for inpatients and ER patients or to the authorizing prescriber identified in the test order for outpatients.
- Please note, despite the fact that these calls are done, the information regarding the individual called and the date/time of the notification can no longer be embedded into the test result itself. This information is captured separately as a communication logs within the EPIC Beaker Module.
- Authorizing prescribers should confirm that the contact information in the Provider Registry is appropriate for critical notification contact.

## Results

- Reports
  - The formatting of most reports viewed in or being reported from Connect Care sites will change.
- Result delivery
  - All laboratory results will continue to be sent to NetCare.
  - Tests that have been sent to labs that are external to Connect Care (e.g. Mayo Clinic) without an available interface will either have their results available for viewing within Connect Care as a scanned result in Chart Review or will be faxed/mailed to the original requesting practitioner. Due to the nature of some of these reports, these scans may not be accepted by NetCare or many downstream EMR systems.
  - For providers at Launch 7 sites, there may be a transition period for routing of offsite testing collected prior to cutover. Ongoing monitoring of historical delivery systems is recommended during the transition. Results from legacy systems will also be available in Epic Chart Review.
  - For providers in environments not live with Connect Care, results should continue to be sent to you as they are in current state (e.g. Print, fax or e-delivery) as long as your Connect Care Provider and Submitter IDs were provided with the order.
  - Provider or Clinics utilizing ER4 will no longer receive results via ER4. Results will be delivered via fax, paper or Connect Care In Basket messaging.



- Result Review Tree / Trending
  - Results Review is accessed in Chart Review on the Labs tab. Trending of results should only be used for comparison of quantitative parameters to historical as long as the method and reference ranges match. Many legacy system results will not trend on the same line as EPIC generated results.
  - Lab Reports should be reviewed in full to ensure that complete result parameters, limitations of the tests and interpretative comments are not missed. These can be accessed in the Chart Review Lab Reports activity, by double clicking a result in Results Review, or by right clicking and opening Result Details.
  - The **Lab Component Organization and Results Review Optimization Project** is underway. Until completion, you may experience issues with the use of system and personalized SmartTools, flowsheets, reports, and Results Review (aka lab results review tree / flowsheet) as configuration is updated. While this work is underway, we encourage using the chronological Lab Reports view in Connect Care or Netcare for result review. If issues are significantly impacting clinical workflow or patient care, please log a ticket with IT.

### Transfusion Medicine

- Post launch all orders for blood components and products/derivatives will need to be placed within EPIC. Any patient in Launch 7 facilities, including preadmission clinic patients, who had pretransfusion testing collected prior to Launch 7, will need recollection of their type and screen after 0500h on Nov 5<sup>th</sup> if red cells are required. If unclear as to whether or not recollection is required, please contact your on site transfusion medicine laboratory.
- [Updates to Transfusion Medicine Client Resources \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](https://albertahealthservices.ca)

### Point of Care Testing (POCT)

- All reporting within Connect Care will reflect the standardized provincial reference intervals and critical values. [Connect Care Launch 7 Readiness – POCT Programs \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](https://albertahealthservices.ca)

### How this will impact you

- Awareness of the many changes will help clinicians continue to provide patient care.

### Action Required

- Where clinically appropriate and lab testing is not required urgently, please ask patients to hold on routine visits to the lab in Launch 7 locations until after Nov 19<sup>th</sup> to allow for system stability.
- **Please be patient** while our teams are transitioning to new systems and processes.
- **Clinical staff are asked to have extra vigilance in ensuring tests have been ordered, interpreted and received appropriately.**
- Monitor unit and lab collection requests. Phone the lab if you are concerned about a possible missed collection.

**Effective** November 5, 2023

### Questions/Concerns

- For any urgent Connect Care concerns, please call the IT Solution Centre (aka Help Desk) at: 1-877-311-4300
- If you have concerns regarding the format and content of results, please contact:
  - South Sector**
    - APL Lab information Centre (LIC) 403-770-3602 for Hospital/AHS Ambulatory results
    - APL Client Interface Team (CIT) 403-770-3959 for report distribution problems



**Results and information for community collections sites**

***South Zone/ Calgary Area-***

- DynaLIFE Laboratory Information Centre at 1-800-661-9876 option 2.

***North Zone/Central Zone/Edmonton Area-***

- DynaLIFE Laboratory Information Centre at 1-800-661-9876 option 3.

- Specific lab related medical questions can be forwarded to Dr. Susan Nahirniak ([susan.nahirniak@aplabs.ca](mailto:susan.nahirniak@aplabs.ca)) or the appropriate Laboratory Medical Scientific staff on-call for your local laboratory.

**Approved by**

- Dr. Susan Nahirniak, Medical Informatics Lead & Associate Medical Director, North Sector APL

*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.*