

DATE:	8 August 2023
TO:	Edmonton Zone Physicians and Nurse Practitioners
FROM:	Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
RE:	Pilot of new Provincial Connect Care Cerebrospinal Fluid (CSF) Collection Guidelines and UAH Lab Processing Update

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- New Guidelines can be accessed via: [Provincial Connect Care Cerebrospinal Fluid \(CSF\) Collection Guidelines \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](https://albertahealthservices.ca) or via the [Alberta Precision Laboratories Test Directory](#) when searching for the most common CSF tests.
- The Guidelines apply to all Edmonton Zone sites. However, only the UAH is also piloting CSF lab processing updates. Eventually it is hoped all these changes can be implemented provincially.

Background

- There have been a significant number of adverse patient events reported at Connect Care sites related to misdirection or suboptimal use of CSF.
- Problems have previously been partially mitigated by addressing CSF Tube Labeling. See Lab Bulletin of 2021-11-29: [Changes to Labels for CSF Testing in Connect Care \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](https://albertahealthservices.ca)

How this will impact you

- The “primary reason” for CSF testing is specified by the ordering clinician in the following way:
 - The “Cell Count, CSF” test is ordered on the vast majority of CSF collections.
 - This test requires the clinician to answer the question “Choose the primary reason for procurement, suspected or known” with 1 of 4 possible answers: Infective Process, Subarachnoid Hemorrhage, Malignancy or Autoimmune/inflammatory Process.
- UAH lab staff will distribute aliquots of CSF to the various testing departments using the Guidelines referenced above. If there is additional CSF volume available after minimums have been distributed, then this will be preferentially distributed according to the “primary reason” for testing.
 - For example if the “primary reason” is “Malignancy”, and there is enough minimum volume for all ordered tests, any remaining volume will be allocated to tests with green color coding (eg. “Leukemia\Lymphoma Immunophenotyping”, “Non-Gynecological Cytology”, etc.).
- If minimum volumes for all tests are not available, then the clinician will be called to prioritize testing. If the clinician cannot be reached after multiple attempts, lab staff will prioritize testing based on the “primary reason” for CSF testing.

Action Required

- When collecting CSF, use the Guidelines to determine how many tubes, and how much volume (mL) is needed in each tube for all ordered tests.
 - Note that because of provincial standardization, some tests previously performed on Tube 1 are now performed in Tube 4. **Please try to collect less CSF in Tube 1 and more CSF in Tube 4.**



Effective

- Monday August 21, 2023

Questions/Concerns

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Approved by

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