

DATE:	2022 June 30
TO:	All Zones – AHS Continuing Care and Seniors Health
FROM:	Point of Care Testing (POCT), Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
RE:	POCT Abbott Panbio COVID-19 Continuing Care and Seniors Health Staff and Visitor Screening Program Discontinuation

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Key Message

Effective June 30, 2022 the COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Screening program mandate for staff and visitors at AHS Continuing and Long Term Care facilities will discontinue, as per the Alberta Health Minister decision on June 20, 2022.

- The requirement to participate in staff and visitor screening using the Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) POCT program will end

Background

Early in 2021, Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) required COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Screening for staff and visitors to be completed at AHS Continuing and Long Term Care facilities. APL POCT implemented the [Asymptomatic Screening for Continuing Care - Panbio COVID-19 Ag Rapid Test Program](#) to support this.

How this will impact you

The change in staff/visitor screening impacts the APL POCT [Asymptomatic Screening for Continuing Care - Panbio COVID-19 Ag Rapid Test Program](#)

- As of June 30, 2022, participation in the program is no longer required
- As of August 1, 2022, the program will no longer be available by APL POCT

If POCT COVID-19 testing is required for patients at your site, please contact APL POCT

- Patient testing with COVID-19 rapid antigen screening (e.g. using Abbot Panbio kits) at AHS Continuing and Long Term Care facilities is not approved at this time

Action Required

Be aware of program processes and changes for your clinical practice area.

- Continue to follow AHS [COVID-19 Fit for Work](#)
- Contact APL POCT if alternate POCT COVID-19 patient testing is required for your site

Inquiries and feedback:

AHS Continuing Care inquiries may be directed to:

- Heather Vint, Provincial Director Seniors Health and Continuing Care, AHS

APL POCT inquiries may be directed to:

- Tracy Guttridge, Provincial POCT Manager, APL, tracy.guttridge@aplabs.ca

Approved by

- Allison Venner, PhD, FCACB, Provincial POCT Medical Lead, APL
- Nathan Zelyas, Medical Microbiologist, Acting Medical/Scientific Director, APL Public Health Laboratory
- James Silvius, Senior Medical Director, Provincial Seniors Health & Continuing Care, AHS