

DATE:	14 November 2022
TO:	South, Calgary, and Central Zone Health Care Providers
FROM:	Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
RE:	Rotavirus Antigen Testing Discontinuation and Alternative Test

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Key Message

- Effective November 28, 2022, **rotavirus antigen testing** will no longer be available. Requests for this test after this date will be cancelled.
- Clinicians with patients who require testing for viruses that cause gastroenteritis should order the Gastroenteritis Virus Panel (GVP) polymerase chain reaction (PCR) if criteria for testing is met (see below). This test targets norovirus genogroup 1 and 2 (G1 and G2), rotavirus, adenovirus, sapovirus and astrovirus.

Background

- The sensitivity of the antigen test is inferior to PCR.
- Rotavirus antigen testing was implemented in Calgary Zone before rotavirus vaccination and the GVP were implemented. In part due to vaccinations, rotavirus is now one of the least common viruses causing diarrhea in Alberta. Norovirus and adenovirus are more common. Other viruses have similar prevalence to rotavirus (sapovirus and astrovirus). From July 2021 to June 2022, only 0.2% of all stools submitted for rotavirus antigen testing were positive.
- The GVP PCR test is performed at the APL Public Health Laboratory (ProvLab) and has been available since 2015. The turnaround time from receipt in lab to report is less than 72h.
- Testing for these viral pathogens rarely impacts patient management, but in some situations, it can be valuable for clinical or public health applications.
- **The criteria for GVP PCR testing are:**
 - Acute care patients (urgent care, emergency, or hospitalized patients)
 - Community patient less than 6 years old
 - Outbreak investigations
 - Immunocompromised patients

Action Required

- Stop ordering rotavirus antigen testing. Rotavirus antigen testing will no longer be available in SCM, Meditech, and Connect Care.
- The GVP PCR can be ordered in these systems as “Gastroenteritis Virus Panel”. In Meditech order VIROV1 and indicate “Gastroenteritis Virus Panel”.
- If ordering using a paper requisition use the ProvLab “Molecular and Serology Requisition” found at: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-20676.pdf>

Questions

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Approved by

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