



Date: December 16, 2019
To: All Physicians, All Zones, Infectious Disease Physicians, Gastroenterology Physicians, Hepatology Physicians
From: Public Health Laboratory (ProvLab)
Re: Hepatitis C Testing Changes

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Key Message:

- Diagnosis of active Hepatitis C virus (HCV) requires two tests: HCVAB and HCV RNA.
- Beginning December 12th, 2019, samples that are positive by HCV antibody testing (HCVAB) will now **automatically** receive HCV molecular testing (HCV RNA) on the **same** sample (if there is no record of a previous positive test done by ProvLab).
 - Once a patient is positive for HCVAB, additional HCVAB are not required, therefore, additional requests for HCVAB will not be performed.
 - HCVAB positive patients should be monitored with HCV RNA testing.
- HCV genotypes are now no longer required by Alberta Blue Cross or NIHB if a pangenotypic regimen is used for treatment.
- Starting December 12th, 2019, reflex testing of HCV genotyping on HCV RNA positive samples will no longer be performed. HCV genotyping will still be available upon special request to the ProvLab VOC by the physician.

Actions Required:

- Please ensure sufficient sample volume is submitted for HCV antibody and HCV molecular testing (**1 full SST blood tube**). Detailed information about these tests can be found on the Alberta Precision Laboratories [Test Directory](#).

Why this is important:

- ProvLab is working with its partners in infectious disease and hepatology to optimize the testing of specimens for HCV nucleic acid tests and developing cost effective testing strategies. This work will improve turn around time for molecular results (as a second specimen is not required), and will reduce the number of unnecessary antibody and genotype tests being performed.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

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