

**Date:** January 14, 2019  
**To:** South Zone Hospital Units and Emergency Departments  
**From:** Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab) & CLS  
**Re:** Influenza/RSV PCR Testing in South Zone: Testing and Ordering

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**Key Messages:**

- General:* Effective Jan. 14, 2019, respiratory virus testing and ordering processes are changing.
- Flu/RSV PCR:* PCR for influenza A/B and RSV will be piloted in the regional hospitals in Medicine Hat and Lethbridge for hospital patients (emergency and inpatients).
- RPP:* The respiratory pathogen panel (RPP) performed at the Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab) will be available, but only in specific clinical circumstances.

**Background:**

- RPP:* The RPP is a viral panel with 20 targets performed by ProvLab, which currently represents most of the respiratory virus testing in the province.
- Flu/RSV PCR:* The influenza/RSV PCR detects influenza A, B, and RSV, and will be performed on-site at Chinook Regional Hospital (CRH) and Medicine Hat Regional Hospital (MHRH).
  - Rapid RSV antigen testing will no longer be performed due to poor sensitivity.

**Action Required:**

- General:* Acceptable specimens for testing remain the same: nasopharyngeal swabs or aspirates (in universal transport media), and bronchoscopic specimens.
  - **Hospital patients must have their orders submitted through Meditech.** If an order for respiratory viruses from hospital is received with a ProvLab requisition only, the unit will be instructed to resubmit using Meditech. The order and information submitted through Meditech will be considered the source of truth if both are submitted.
  - Previously, VIROV1 was the order in Meditech for viral testing, including respiratory viruses. This will no longer be used for respiratory viruses, all of which should be ordered using the Meditech orderable RSVINF.
- Flu/RSV PCR:* In most situations, influenza and RSV testing will be sufficient.
  - Physicians may order the RSV/Influenza specifically (e.g. "NP swab for flu", "flu/RSV testing") or generically (e.g. "NP swab for viruses", "respiratory virus testing").
  - For all such tests, order **RSVINF**, and indicate "test ordered" as **RSVINF** (default).

Category	*Procedure	Procedure Name	*Priority	Quantity	*Date	Time	Series
1	MIC	RSVINF	RAPID RSV AND INFL...	S	T	20/12	1423

  

*Test Ordered?	RSVINF
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- No historical indications are necessary for RSVINF testing to be performed.
- Order the test as routine unless directed by the physician to order as stat.

*RPP:* Physician orders requiring RPP testing should clearly indicate “RPP” or “respiratory pathogen panel” as part of the order. Otherwise, order RSV/Influenza PCR as above

- When ordering the RPP, order **RSVINF**, and indicate “test ordered” as **RSVRPP**.

Category	*Procedure	Procedure Name	*Priority	Quantity	*Date	Time	Series
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\*Test Ordered? **RSVRPP**

- Physicians must provide a history of specified clinical criteria when ordering the RPP, including hypoxic respiratory failure, severe immunocompromise, and outbreak.
- Indicate the provided history in the history section of the order.

\*Significant Hx?

No history  Hypoxic Resp failure  Severe Immunocompromise  Outbreak

Outbreak EI#: |

- For outbreaks, if an EI # is available, enter it in the specified field.
- If the RPP is otherwise needed, the physician must page the virologist/microbiologist-on-call for ProvLab South at 403-944-1200, or through FMC switchboard (403-944-1110).

**Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:**

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**This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:**

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