Date: September 29, 2015

To: Edmonton Zone and Calgary Lab Services
   Physicians, Nurse Managers, Educators and Practitioners, Laboratory Directors
   and Managers

From: AHS Laboratory Services

Re: New Hemoglobin A1c Test Utilization Criteria

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

• **Effective October 14, 2015** – New provincial Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) test utilization
  criteria will be implemented by laboratories in Edmonton Zone and Urban and rural
  laboratories in Calgary Lab services.
• Order frequency will be limited to one HbA1c request within a 90 day period.
• Order frequency for pregnant females between the ages of 15 – 45 years (inclusive) will be
  limited to one HbA1c request within a 30 day period. This is intended for those individuals who
  are pregnant and require treatment.
• The new criteria align with the following recommendation by the 2013 Canadian Diabetes Association.

  *For most individuals with diabetes, A1C should be measured every 3 months to ensure that glycemic goals are being met or maintained. Testing at least every 6 months should be performed in adults during periods of treatment and lifestyle stability when glycemic targets have been consistently achieved.*

Action Required:

• Do not order HbA1c with a frequency of greater than once every 90 days:

  Exception – for pregnant patients requiring treatment – do not order HbA1c with a
  frequency greater than once every 30 days.

Why this is important:

• The Laboratory Information System (LIS) will not accept test requests for HbA1c if
  ordered with a frequency greater than specified above.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

• Dr. Connie Prosser PhD, FCACB
  o ph:  780-407-8492
  o e-mail: connie.prosser@albertahealthservices.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

Dr. Carolyn O’Hara, Medical/Scientific Director, AHS Laboratory Services
Dr. Raymond Lai, Medical Director, **DynaLIFE**dx
Dr. Hossein Sadrzadeh, Chief of Clinical Biochemistry Section, Calgary Lab Services
Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c)

Dear Patient,

The HbA1c test your doctor ordered is used to diagnose diabetes or to learn how well your diabetes is being managed.

The Canadian Diabetes Association has made a new recommendation about how often the HbA1c test needs to be done. Alberta Health Services will follow the new recommendation.

As such, the HbA1c test will be done no more than every 90 days (3 months). This is because the test measures the average amount of glucose (sugar) in the blood over 3 months.

Your record shows that your last HbA1c test was done less than 90 days ago. This means that your test won’t be done at this time.

If you have questions about how often you think your HbA1c test should be done, please speak with your doctor.

Sincerely,

Dr. James Wesenberg  
Provincial Medical/Scientific Director  
AHS Laboratory Services

Dr. Leland Baskin  
Medical Director and VP Medical  
Calgary Laboratory Services

Dr. Raymond Lai  
Medical Director  
DynaLIFE_{Dx}