
Date: May 17, 2016

To: All Physicians, All Zones, Infectious Disease Physicians, Gastroenterology Physicians and HIV Physicians

From: Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab)

Re: **New** HIV Diagnostic Algorithm

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

- **HIV confirmatory testing by Western Blot will be replaced with Geenius™ HIV 1/2 Confirmation Assay; an immunochromatographic Antibody Differentiation assay.**
- As of **May 24, 2016**, all first and second time HIV 4th generation EIA positives will be confirmed using this Antibody Differentiation assay, which will differentiate between HIV-1 and HIV-2.
- Samples that are positive on EIA, but negative or indeterminate by Antibody Differentiation, will require a follow-up EDTA sample to be submitted for qualitative HIV NAT testing.
- The name of HIV NAT used for the diagnosis of HIV infection is: **HIVQUAL**
 - A positive or negative result for HIV will be given (no quantitative data will be supplied).
- If an HIVQUAL sample is not received within 10 days, a one-time reminder will be sent to the ordering physician to ensure timely follow-up. Diagnostic HIV testing is NOT complete for patients with negative or indeterminate antibody differentiation result without an HIVQUAL test.
- The full HIV algorithm can be found on the Education page of the ProvLab website at: <http://www.provlab.ab.ca/education.htm> or by clicking [here](#).

Actions Required:

- For patients with negative or indeterminate HIV Antibody Differentiation result, submit an EDTA sample for follow-up HIVQUAL testing.
- When ordering HIV NAT for diagnostics, please write “**HIVQUAL**” on the requisition.

Why this is important:

- Antibody differentiation testing provides accurate HIV antibodies results for 94% of indeterminate Western Blot samples, and is able to identify true positive HIV infections earlier in the infectious process compared to Western Blot.
- The remaining 6% indeterminate samples can be resolved with the HIVQUAL assay.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

Dr. Carmen Charlton, Clinical Microbiologist ProvLab; Carmen.Charlton@AlbertaHealthServices.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

Dr. Graham Tipples, Medical / Scientific Director, ProvLab