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**Date:** October 7, 2013

**To:** Alberta Health, Alberta MicroNet, Infectious Diseases Physicians, Medical Officers of Health, Laboratory Directors and Managers

**From:** Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab)

**Re:** Reduced post-end-of-treatment (EOT) followup testing in hepatitis C (HCV)-infected patients

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**Key Messages:**

- **Effective 10 October 2013**, only one HCV RNA (HCV VL) test will be routinely performed for HCV-infected patients who have completed therapy.
- Published studies and local practice-based experience indicate that a single HCV RNA test within the 12-24 weeks after completion of therapy gives a reliable confirmation of sustained virological response (SVR) at these time points in most patients.
- Therefore, unless there are special requests from individual physicians for specific patients, only one follow up HCV RNA test will be routinely performed for HCV-infected patients who have satisfactorily completed their designated course of treatment.

**Why this is important:**

- In most patients, there is little or no evidence or practice-based experience to show that follow up testing for HCV RNA beyond 24 weeks post-EOT offers any additional benefit with regard to confirming an SVR status.
- Additional and unnecessary HCV RNA testing beyond the 12-24 post-EOT time point is costly and does not contribute further to patient management

**Action required:**

- If required forward a special request for multiple tests to Dr. Julian Tang or the virologist-on-call

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

- Dr. Julian Tang, Virologist, ProvLab at: 780-407-3068 or E-mail: [Julian.tang@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:Julian.tang@albertahealthservices.ca)
- Edmonton Site – Phone: 780-407-7121 (ask for the Virologist-on-Call)
- Calgary Site – Phone: 403-944-1200 (ask for the Virologist-on-Call)

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

Dr. Graham Tipples, Medical / Scientific Director, Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab)