



Date: April 15, 2020
To: All Physicians and Frontline Clinical Staff
From: Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
Re: Pneumatic Tube and Telelift Transport Systems (COVID-19)

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Key Message:

- APL will continue to accept specimens on patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 transported in the pneumatic tube and telelift systems. COVID-19 specimens are not on an exclusion list.
- Continue to adhere to the general requirements for packaging and exclusions at your facility.
- From a biosafety perspective, the following parameters must be met for all specimens transported in pneumatic tube systems and telelifts:
 - Ensure the lids of the primary specimen containers are securely fastened. Primary specimen containers should be inspected for leaks or cracks prior to using and prior to loading into the system.
 - Ensure the biohazard transport bag is sealed. For larger volumes specimens/fluids, or for containers with higher risk of leaking, ensure there is adequate absorbent material or double bag.
 - Ensure adherence to your facility safety guidelines and follow the equipment carrier volume limitations.

Background:

- As the COVID-19 outbreak evolves, specimens from patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 will continue to increase the use of the pneumatic tube/telelift transport systems. These systems are essential for site operations and for patient care.
- SARS-CoV-2 (virus causing COVID-19) is an emerging pathogen and a risk assessment was performed. It was determined the specimens can be safely transported in the pneumatic tube or telelift systems. Current safety practices are sufficient to address the risk level.

How this will impact you:

- Continue your current practices for transportation using pneumatic tube and telelift systems.

Action Required:

- Follow your site's guidelines for using these systems and ensure your pneumatic tube / telelift system documents are updated appropriately.
- Ensure you adhere to the biosafety requirements indicated as above.
- If a laboratory specimen is sent in error to your area, please redirect to laboratory.

Effective: April 15, 2020

Questions/Concerns

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- Ravinder Mavi, North Sector Biological Safety Officer

Approved by

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- Alberta Precision Labs COVID Incident Command Center