



Date: May 20, 2020
To: Physicians, Nurses, and Units at Foothills Medical Centre (FMC) and Peter Lougheed Centre (PLC)
From: Microbiology Section and Public Health Laboratory, Calgary, Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
Re: Rapid COVID-19 Testing Pilot for PLC and FMC Inpatients

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message:

- Effective **May 21, 2020**, COVID-19 testing specimens submitted from inpatients at the Foothills Medical Centre (FMC) and the Peter Lougheed Centre (PLC) in Calgary will be tested with the Simplexa[®], GeneXpert[®], or BD Max[™] nucleic acid tests (NAT).
- Results will be available within 6 hours of receipt at the hospital laboratory.
- Acceptable specimens include nasopharyngeal (NP) and throat swabs (in Universal Transport Media, ESwab, or saline), NP and endotracheal tube aspirates, and bronchoalveolar lavages.
- Contact & droplet precautions should only be discontinued in accordance with Infection Prevention & Control (IP&C) guidelines or consultation, and should take into account the patient's clinical and radiological findings.

Why This Is Important:

- The performance characteristics of the Simplexa[®] COVID-19 Direct (Diasorin), the Xpert[®] Xpress SARS-CoV-2 (Cepheid), and the BD Max[™] SARS-CoV-2 (BD) assays are similar to the COVID-19 lab-developed test being used at the APL-Public Health Laboratory.
- Additional confirmatory testing is not necessary.
- Due to limited supplies, this testing is currently being offered to PLC and FMC inpatients on a pilot basis. Work is ongoing to expand this testing to provide rapid results to more sites.

Action Required:

- Ordering "COVID-19 Testing" in SCM on inpatients at FMC or PLC will automatically order the rapid test. No further action is required.
- Specimens from the emergency department (ED) and outpatient locations will continue to be sent to the APL-Public Health Laboratory for COVID-19 PCR.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

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