

Date: September 23, 2014

To: South Zone – East
Physicians, Nurses, MHDL, and SZE Laboratory Staff

From: AHS Laboratory Services – South Zone East

Re: Discontinuation of Amylase Testing

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

- Effective October 1, 2014 Amylase testing will no longer be available in Medicine Hat Regional Hospital.
- Serum lipase values are more specific than serum amylase levels in patients suspected of having acute pancreatitis. Pancreatitis is almost always present when lipase levels measure three times the upper limit of normal. There is little value in measurement of amylase. Therefore amylase testing will no longer be performed at Medicine Hat Regional Hospital.

Why this is important:

- If amylase is requested on serum MHRH laboratory will not perform the test and will ask the ordering physician to discuss the testing with a pathologist. Amylase testing on serum, urine and fluids will continue to be available, but as a referred out test with greater than 24 hour turnaround time to result delivery.

Action Required:

- If a physician requires amylase testing they should contact a pathologist at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital Laboratory to discuss the request and approve sending the sample to a referral lab for testing.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

- Dr. Michael O'Connor at 403-529-8867 or email: Michael.O'Connor@albertahealthservices.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

Dr. Michael O'Connor, AHS Zone Clinical Department Head (Co-Lead) Laboratory Medicine South Zone