
Date: June 9, 2011

To: Alberta Health and Wellness, Medical Officers of Health, All Physicians, Alberta MicroNet, Infection Prevention and Control, Laboratory Directors and Managers

From: Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab)

Re: HIV, HCV and HBV serology testing change

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Background:

Screening for hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is usually done by detecting antibodies against these viruses. Over the next several weeks, ProvLab at both sites (Calgary and Edmonton) will be replacing the current testing platform (Abbott AxSYM) with a newer generation testing platform (Abbott Architect). It is anticipated that all serology testing for these viruses will be done on the Architect by July 7, 2011.

An evaluation performed by ProvLab across both sites indicated that the Architect platform performed very well. This included accuracy, precision, sensitivity and specificity when compared to the existing platform. Markers evaluated included: anti-HIV, anti-HCV, anti-HBs, anti-HBe, HBeAg, HBsAg, and anti-HBc IgG. For anti-HBc IgM – due to a limited and very small number of archived specimens, testing will continue to be performed in parallel on the new Architect platform and the existing AxSYM platform until August 2011.

Laboratory Testing:

This transition should have little or no impact on stakeholders or collection sites. There is no change related to collection tube requirements or indications for testing. There will be no changes in cut off values, interpretation of results or in reports generated by ProvLab.

Partner laboratories, *DynaLIFE_{Dx}* and Calgary Laboratory Services already are offering or will be offering testing for these analytes on the Abbott Architect platform in the near future, resulting in greater standardization of assays in Alberta.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

Edmonton Site – Ph: 780-407-7121 (ask for Virologist-on-Call)
Calgary Site – Ph: 403-944-1200 (ask for Virologist-on-Call)

For specimen collection information, please refer to the ProvLab Guide to Services at:
<http://www.provlab.ab.ca/guide-to-services.pdf> or <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/3217.asp>

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by Dr. Marie Louie, Acting Medical Director of ProvLab