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**Date:** February 28, 2011

**To:** Emergency Physicians, Infectious Disease Physicians, Intensive Care Specialists, Medical Officers of Health, Neurologists, Transplant Services and Laboratory Directors and Managers

**From:** ProvLab

**Re:** Modification of Viral Testing on Cerebrospinal Fluid (CSF) Samples

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**Key Messages:**

**Effective March 15, 2011**, the current Herpes simplex virus (HSV) PCR assay used at ProvLab will be replaced by a multiplex assay that will test simultaneously for HSV-1, HSV-2 and Varicella zoster virus (VZV). All cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) samples received at ProvLab with a request for “viral PCR”, “viral culture”, “viral studies” or a diagnosis of encephalitis or aseptic meningitis will be tested by default for:

- Herpes simplex virus (HSV-1 and 2) / Varicella zoster virus (VZV)
- Enteroviruses
- West Nile virus (WNV) (June 1 to October 30)

Please note that requests for molecular detection of other viruses in CSF samples require a consultation with the Virologist on Call (VOC) at ProvLab prior to submission.

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

**Questions & Comments:**

If you have any questions or comments regarding this bulletin, please contact:  
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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by Dr. Greg Tyrell, Acting Associate Medical Director of ProvLab