

# Important Notice:

## Discontinuation of Stool Electrolytes (Na & K) Testing

Issued October 1, 2021

<b>To:</b>	All NH Physicians and Nursing Wards
<b>From:</b>	Dr. K. Heydarzadeh-Azar, Pathologist NE & NW HSDA Dr. V. Meneghetti, Pathologist NI HSADA
<b>Cc:</b>	Lisette Vienneau, NH Director of Diagnostic Services
<b>Re:</b>	Discontinuation of Stool Electrolytes (Na & K) Testing

### **Background:**

- A test volume audit revealed a total of 4 stool electrolytes ordered in a one year time frame in all Northern Health. Of these, 3 were cancelled due to *“Inappropriate sample. A formed stool specimen was submitted for analysis”*.
- Additionally, studies published in literature have concluded that measurement of fecal fluid electrolyte concentrations are of little value as diagnostic procedure in chronic diarrhea. Determination of stool electrolytes may help to elucidate the pathogenesis of diarrhea in different disorders but does not seem diagnostically useful.
- The decision to discontinue stool electrolytes testing in NH was endorsed by the Laboratory Utilization Committee (LUC) on September 10, 2021.

### **Action:**

- Stool electrolytes testing and fecal osmotic gap will be discontinued starting November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.
- Northern Health will continue to offer stool osmolality testing.

Please direct any inquiries or feedback to:

Dr. K. Heydarzadeh-Azar, 250-261-7458, [kamran.azar@northernhealth.ca](mailto:kamran.azar@northernhealth.ca)

Dr. V. Meneghetti, 250-565-2421, [victor.meneghetti@northernhealth.ca](mailto:victor.meneghetti@northernhealth.ca)