

Date:	June 26, 2020
To:	All Medical Staff and Northern Health Clinical Leadership
From:	Lisette Vienneau, Regional Director of Diagnostic Services Dr. Kamran Azar, NH Lab Medical Lead
Re:	COVID-19 Restart Plan – Laboratory Service Update

On March 24, 2020 Northern Health laboratories initiated a reduction of outpatient services in accordance with the provincial COVID-19 outbreak response, restricting collections to those meeting the criteria for essential service.

We are pleased to announce that labs are prepared to lift restrictions on outpatient services and resume normal operations beginning **Monday, July 6, 2020**.

After restrictions have been lifted, providers may re-submit orders where testing is still required for outpatient services that did not meet essential service criteria. **Labs will not be contacting patients that were not collected during this time unless new orders are received.**

Please note that because of new COVID-19 safety protocols, there is reduced outpatient capacity at many collection facilities and patients may experience longer than normal wait times. We also anticipate a surge in outpatient volumes once restrictions are lifted, which will add to the appointment backlog. Consequently, turnaround time for non-urgent results may also be increased. For specific information on laboratory wait times in your community, please contact your [local laboratory](#).

For further information or questions, please contact Medical Lead Dr. Kamran Azar or Lisette Vienneau, Regional Director of Diagnostic Services at Lisette.vienneau@northernhealth.ca