

Date:	May 14, 2020
To:	Health Service Administrators and Chief Technologists for Diagnostic Services
From:	Penny Anguish, NI COO and NH EOC Operational Lead Dr. Ronald Chapman, VP Medicine Lisette Vienneau, Regional Director of Diagnostic Services
CC	Angela De Smit, NE COO, Ciro Panessa, NW COO, Medical Directors, Medical Leads Dr Azar, Dr Farooq, Dr S Olsen, NH EOC
Re:	Diagnostic Services Ramp-up to Support Pre-Operative Assessment (Laboratory, Medical Imaging and Respiratory)

As Northern Health resumes elective surgical procedures across the region, diagnostic services must prepare to accommodate the corresponding increase in outpatient collections and exams.

Currently, Northern Health Labs and Medical Imaging (MI) are operating under provincial restrictions for outpatient services, meaning that facilities have reduced hours and have limited capacity to inpatient and urgent outpatient service. Several facilities are pre-booking appointments, some with wait times up to 14 days. In order to accommodate pre-operative patients, there will be a need to increase current capacity at many facilities.

Laboratory, Medical Imaging and Respiratory managers must work with their HSA and local OR managers to ensure that:

- Respiratory Therapy will continue to perform urgent diagnostic testing for pre-surgical patients
- Medical Imaging and Lab departments receive OR slates ahead of time to plan for required diagnostics
- Pre-operative collections and exams orders are completed prior to patient's surgery date
- Urgent pre-operative collections and exams can be prioritized when required

In order to accommodate pre-operative collections and exams, options include the following with decision making in collaboration with the HSAs:

- Perform collections and exams for pre-operative patients outside of scheduled collection hours
- Schedule additional FTE (including overtime, if required)

The following principles should continue to guide the ramp up of Labs, MI and Respiratory services across Northern Health to ensure that we maintain staff and patient safety:

- Adherence to provincial guidelines and directives
- Maintenance of physical distancing in waiting and collection areas
- Adherence to infection control directives on PPE usage and cleaning procedures
- Communicate the re-start of surgical services and expected impact with their team

Further direction will be provided next week concerning the reintroduction of other diagnostic services.

For more information, please contact Lisette Vienneau, Regional Director of Diagnostic Services at Lisette.vienneau@northernhealth.ca