

Date:	May 12, 2020
To:	All Northern Health Staff and Physicians
From:	Dr. Ronald Chapman, VP Medicine, Northern Lead Dr. Randy Dumont, NI Pathologist Dr. Kamran Azar, NH Lab Medical Lead
Cc	The COO's The Medical Directors
Re:	Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) – COVID-19 In-House Testing Restrictions *Update to include specific First Nations locations, Long Term Care, Outbreak and public health/MHO requests*

Northern Health Lab services has been working towards validating a COVID-19 assay for testing in-house. On April 21st, UHNBC begin testing for COVID-19 for eligible patients within Northern Health. Initial testing will be performed at UHNBC, with forthcoming expansion to MMH and FSJH.

Due to the ongoing limited supply of test kits, in-house testing was initially limited to:

- **HOSP**
 - Symptomatic Hospital (Inpatient)
 - Symptomatic Emergency Department (with intent to admit)
 - Symptomatic pregnant woman in their 3rd trimester
 - Symptomatic Renal patients
 - Symptomatic Cancer patients receiving treatment
 - Symptomatic Other immunocompromised patients

Effective immediately, in-house testing will be extended to:

- **LTC** – Symptomatic Long term care facility resident
- **OBK** - Symptomatic residents or staff of long term care (LTC) facilities under outbreak investigations
- **Request of public health/MHO**
- **Remote First Nation Communities Symptomatic:**
 - The Fort St James area communities: Takla Lake, Yekooche, Tl'azt'en, Nak'azd'li
 - Finlay Hub area communities: Kwadacha, and Tsay Keh Dene
 - Fort Nelson
 - Coastal Tsimshian: Gitgaat, Kitkatla, Lax Kwalaams, and Metlakatla
 - Tahltan (Telegraph Creek) and Iskut
 - **Mark requisition with the following code: FN-COMM**

Other urgent requests for testing can be discussed with a pathologist on a case-by-case basis. We hope to expand testing if the supply of test kits improves.

Results will be available through regular reporting channels, including PowerChart

Please continue to use the Virology requisition and **Mark** requisitions and samples with one of the following patient groups in **RED**

HOSP

- Hospital (Inpatient)
- Emergency Department (with intent to admit)
- Symptomatic pregnant woman in their 3rd trimester
- Renal patients
- Cancer patients receiving treatment
- Other immunocompromised patients

LTC - Long term care facility resident

OBK – Outbreak

- includes individuals who are homeless or have unstable housing in this category even if no outbreak

HCW1 - Health care worker - direct patient care

- designated as essential service providers (incl. first responders)

HCW2 - Health care worker - indirect patient care

COMM – Community Outpatient (FN COMM for symptomatic FN patients)

- Other community outpatients:
 - Primary Care Clinic or COVID-19 Collection Clinic
 - Emergency Department (non-admitted)
 - COVID-19 Surveillance
 - Returning travelers identified at point of entry.
 - Residents of remote, isolated or indigenous communities

CGT – People living in congregate settings such as

- work-camps
- correctional facilities
- shelters
- group homes
- assisted living
- seniors' residences

Our goal is to improve turnaround time for patients in our health authority and will continue to advocate for additional in-house testing capacity for Northern Health.

For further information or questions please contact the medical leads Dr. Randall Dumont and Dr. Kamran Azar through Lisette Vienneau, Regional Director of Diagnostic Services at Lisette.vienneau@northernhealth.ca