

Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (Microbiology)

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To: Provincial Laboratory Clients

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

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cc: Dr. Jutta K. Preiksaitis
Medical Director, Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (Microbiology)

Dr. Ameeta Singh
Director, Alberta STD Services, Alberta Health and Wellness

Re: *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* Detection Assays

This letter is to inform you that effective immediately the Provincial Laboratory will be performing PCR assays instead of culture for detection of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* from genital specimens, with the exception of specimens from the STD Clinics in Edmonton and Calgary. (Cultures will also be performed on specimens where specifically requested by treating physicians). The accompanying collection sheet outlines specimen collection and transportation requirements for the PCR assay. Please note that PCR testing for *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* can be performed from the same specimen.

If *N. gonorrhoeae* **culture** is also requested, a second swab must be collected and submitted in charcoal transport medium. Culture cannot be performed from the PCR sample.

It is anticipated that the implementation of this service will offer more rapid turn-around times and a higher detection rate for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* for our clients.

Questions may be directed to Dr. Greg Tyrrell at the contact information provided above.