

# LABORATORY BULLETIN

2009-October-23

Bulletin #2009 - 13

To: Alberta Health & Wellness, All Physicians, CDC Nurses, Infection Prevention & Control, Infectious Disease Physicians, Laboratory Managers & Directors, Medical Officers of Health

Re: Directive to use NEW “Requisition for Influenza & Respiratory Virus Testing During the Pandemic”

## PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

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### **Background:**

During the 1<sup>st</sup> wave of the pandemic, the ProvLab received a high volume of samples, with limited clinical information, which did not allow for prioritizing critical samples.

Effective immediately, a NEW province-wide requisition for influenza and respiratory virus testing, approved by AHS Pandemic Steering Committee will be used to prioritize samples and restrict testing depending upon the **provincial pandemic prioritization level** defined by AHS & AHW in response to the background virus prevalence, staffing levels and availability of supplies and resources.

**Note:** This requisition will be included in the ProvLab influenza kits, posted on the **Alberta Health Services and ProvLab websites**. For ProvLab website access, click on Partners, then Partner Updates. The requisition is attached and can be printed as a single page and used immediately.

**Generally pandemic influenza has been a mild self-limiting illness, and testing is not required in mild cases. Indications for testing may include severe disease, risk factors for severe respiratory illness or outbreaks of respiratory illness in facilities as directed by the Medical Officer of Health.**

### **Information Required:**

Provide the following:

- Patient demographics
- PHN – required for posting of laboratory results on Netcare
- Physician or Nurse Practitioner (names and addresses for forwarding copies as applicable)
- Hospital facility and patient location (UNIT)
- In-patients and cases in ER awaiting admission
- EI numbers specific to newly reported outbreaks, as directed by local Medical Officer of Health
- Clinical information
  - Risk factor(s) – for restricting testing based upon level of prioritization
  - Onset of illness – for interpretation of results
  - Travel history – for surveillance of emerging strains
  - Antiviral history – for surveillance and/or selection for antiviral susceptibility testing

**Questions:**

Contact the Virologist-on-Call:

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| Edmonton Laboratory – Phone:<br>780 407 7121 (ask for VOC) or<br>780 407 8822 UAH Switchboard (ask for<br>VOC) | Calgary Laboratory – Phone:<br>403 944 1200 (ask for VOC) |
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This bulletin was distributed to:

- ◆ Alberta Health & Wellness
- ◆ Alberta Health Services Pandemic Physician Communications
  - Province of Alberta – All Physicians
- ◆ Anita Hanrahan
  - CDC Nurses
- ◆ Brenda Hannah
  - Infection Prevention and Control, Alberta
- ◆ Infectious Disease Physicians - Edmonton, Calgary
- ◆ Laboratory Directors/Consultants of Alberta
- ◆ Laboratory Managers - Alberta, Northwest Territories, Nunavut
- ◆ Medical Officers of Health - Alberta, First Nations, Northwest Territories, Nunavut
- ◆ Medical Officers of Health - Alberta-Deputy/Associate