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Central Zone

Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum

To: Physicians and Health Service Directors, Central Zone

From: Dr. Jason LeBlanc, Director, Microbiology- Virology, Immunology & Molecular Section
Jimmy Macdonald, Supervisor, Microbiology- Virology, Immunology & Molecular Section

Date: May 11, 2018

Subject **Change in *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* testing and specimen collection in Central Zone**

The following change to *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* testing and specimen collection is only for testing performed in Central Zone.

On June 6, 2018 the Central Zone Microbiology laboratory is implementing the Panther system from Hologic which will change the way specimens are tested for *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT) and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (GC). This system will provide capacity to accommodate the increased testing volume.

A new collection kit will be required for the collection of vaginal, throat and rectal specimens and available in NSHA stores on May 28th. Please contact NSHA stores through your normal process using the Lab Form to replace any old kits. Any questions please contact the customer service desk at 902-466-8070. The product order number is: **206939 – Swab Multi-test Specimen Collection**. It is important the new kits are available for use on June 6th to ensure a smooth transition.

Criteria for specimen collection is as follows:

1. **The preferred specimen for men remains the first 20 ml of voided urine.**

2. **The preferred specimen for women remains a vaginal swab (not an endocervical swab). Which can either be patient- or physician-collected**. Vaginal collection instructions are attached. The submission of female urine is strongly discouraged because of reduced sensitivity compared to the vaginal swab.

3. **Testing of non-genital specimens.** Although non-genital specimens (eye, throat and rectum) have not been validated in our laboratory, the experience of other laboratories suggests the performance characteristics of these specimen types are reasonable. Clinical correlation in these situations is paramount. The swab used for vaginal specimens can be used for throat and rectal specimens in patients at risk.

4. **Remember to indicate the site from which the swab has been collected** as treatment options can vary depending on the site of infection**.**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the laboratory at 902-473-6881, Dr. LeBlanc 902- 473-7971 or Jimmy Macdonald at 902-473-5528.

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR Aptima® Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit for Chlamydia trachomatis (CT) and Neisseria gonorrhoeae (NG) – VAGINAL swab

Compatible with testing performed at the QEII and Cape Breton Regional Microbiology Labs – Central & Eastern Zones

1. Partially open the swab package and remove the swab. Do not touch the soft tip or lay the swab down. **If the soft tip is touched, laid down, or dropped, discard and get a new Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit.** Hold the swab, placing thumb and forefinger in the middle of the shaft covering the black score line. Do not hold the shaft below the score line.

2. Carefully insert the swab into the vagina about 2 inches (5 cm) past the introitus and gently rotate the swab for 10 to 30 seconds. Make sure the swab touches the vaginal walls so that moisture is absorbed by the swab. Withdraw the swab without touching the skin.

3. While holding the swab in hand, unscrew the tube cap. Do not spill the tube contents. **If the tube contents are spilled, discard and replace with a new Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit.** Immediately place the swab into the transport tube so the black score line is at the top of the tube. Align the score line with the top edge of the tube and carefully break the shaft. The swab will drop to the bottom of the vial. Discard the top portion of the shaft.

4. Tightly screw the cap onto the tube. When collecting multiple specimens from the same patient, the tube label provides a specimen source field for unique identification for the specimen location.