

Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum

To: Physicians and Health Service Directors, Central Zone

From: Dr Todd Hatchette, Chief of Service, Central Zone Microbiology
Charles Heinstein, Manager, Central Zone Microbiology

Date: September 18, 2020

Subject **Reopening of Microbiology Services – STI swabs**

With the current availability of NP swabs, the Microbiology Laboratory can now return to distributing the Hologic Multi-test swabs to clinics for STI testing.

For people with a vagina, the preferred specimen is a vaginal swab rather than urine. This switch reduces the processing time for STI screening in the lab and help increase capacity as we move into the busy respiratory season

Rectal and throat swabs should continue to be collected in those for whom these sites are relevant based on sexual practices.

Given the potential unpredictability or changes in supply chain, swab distribution or usage will be monitored. If supply becomes an issue we will notify clinics and provide further direction.

To place orders for collection supplies please follow the below listed instructions;

- Hologic Multi-test swabs (for STI screening of vaginal, throat and rectal specimens) please contact NSHA stores through your normal process using the Lab Form. The product order number is: **206939– Swab Multi-test Specimen Collection**. Please note the following;
 - Orders will be released on a weekly basis.
 - For questions related to swab delivery contact the customer service desk at 902-466-8070.

Note that STI testing may have variability in testing turnaround time (TAT) dependant on the overall workload in the laboratory.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the laboratory at 902-473-2120, Dr. Hatchette 902- 473-6885 or Charles Heinstein at 902-473-2231.