

## ***Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum***

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To: Nova Scotia Healthcare Providers

From: **Dr. Todd Hatchette – Chief of Service, Division of Microbiology**

**Charles Heinsteins- Manager, Division of Microbiology**

Date: **November 30, 2021**

Subject: **Changes to Testing for Respiratory Viruses**

The Central Zone Microbiology laboratory at the QEII utilizes an algorithm-based approach for the detection of respiratory viruses which varies depending on the timing of the influenza season. The following changes have been implemented effective November 15<sup>th</sup> based on the peak season algorithm:

- All inpatients or LTC facilities with ILI and patients presenting to the ER with ILI that require admission will be tested for influenza A, influenza B and RSV, as well as SARS-CoV-2.
- Community specimens will only be processed for SARS-CoV-2.
- Saline gargles will be processed for SARS-CoV-2, but will not be processed for influenza A, influenza B and RSV testing.
- Expanded respiratory virus testing (for respiratory viruses other than influenza A, B, RSV or SARS-CoV-2) will be limited to immunosuppressed patients or those in the intensive care unit (ICU).
- Expanded respiratory panels will only be processed for patients in whom the primary influenza A/B/RSV test results was negative.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the laboratory at (473-6881) or Dr. Hatchette (473-6885)