

## *Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum*

**To:** NSH Healthcare Providers and Health Service Directors

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**Message: Changes to viral load testing for BK virus**

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Effective immediately, the Central Zone Microbiology laboratory is transitioning to the Roche 6800 instrument for post-transplant viral load testing for BK virus.

- There are no changes in the collection requirements for BK viral loads.
- The validation showed that samples tested by the new and old method generated nearly equivalent values, however, the new method is more sensitive. Consequently, lower levels of BK virus might be detected.
- For kidney transplant patient, plasma measurements greater than  $10^4$  copies/ml are commonly considered significant, and with the new method, this value would represent  $10^{3.5}$  IU/ml. While this difference is small, it is recommended to retest all patient actively being monitored to re-establish a new baseline with the new method.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the laboratory at (902)- 473-6881.