

## Business Continuity Measures: Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

March 17, 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, NSHA must implement business continuity plans to provide COVID-19 testing and sustain critical operations supporting patient care. The following measures will be put in place effective immediately:

- NSHA is requesting physicians and nurse practitioners to restrict orders for all non-urgent laboratory testing including routine\* monitoring of patients, regular check-ups, HGB A1C and routine urinalysis. Any laboratory testing that does not have a direct impact on immediate patient management should be deferred. Time-sensitive testing such as pre-natal care should continue.  
(\*At Healthcare provider's discretion. Routine CBCs, thyroid panels, B12, are examples of "routine". Required management of chronic illness (ie. renal, cancer, INRs) will not be impacted.)
- Swabs to support COVID 19 testing must be conserved and will be strictly managed.
- Due to a global shortage of testing swabs, the QEII Virology Laboratory has implemented the following changes:
  - Testing of critical specimens such as eye/vitreous and CSF will continue as normal.
  - HCV and VZV from genital and skin specimens is suspended.
  - Stool samples for viral pathogens is suspended (norovirus, adenovirus and rotavirus).
  - The turnaround time for other routine microbiology tests in CZ may be delayed.

As the situation evolves, further restrictions in laboratory testing may become necessary. We appreciate your cooperation and patience at this difficult time.

If you have any questions, please contact your local laboratory directly.

Regards,  
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