

SHA Laboratory Medicine Provincial Program Bulletin – Updated June 6, 2020

Date: June 15, 2020

To: All Physicians and Care Providers

From: Lenore Howey, Executive Director and Dr. Fergall Magee, Provincial Medical Director

Re: **Laboratory Medicine - Biochemistry testing remains limited**

NOTE: COVID-19 testing criterion is overseen by Public Health.

Updated information can be referenced at www.saskatchewan.ca/COVID19

PLEASE POST AND DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

- Laboratory Medicine has worked to increase testing capacity for COVID-19 throughout the province with a goal of 1500 COVID tests/day. This work is not completed but it is now at a state of controlled implementation with solid project plans in place which are being monitored daily.
- We are asking for your support and understanding to continue to limit routine laboratory testing, **based on your clinical judgement**, to ensure we can maintain a strong base of laboratory services for both COVID and NON-COVID patients within all our laboratory operations.
 - Reducing/eliminating collection of specimens that are currently non-urgent will allow our staff to focus testing on patients requiring active intervention across all clinical services.
 - Minimization of patient visits to Patient Service Centers, Patient Care Centers and other lab collection sites will reduce the potential for viral transmission, **protecting patients and staff**.
- **Microbiology (Bacteriology, Virology and Molecular)** – will resume its full testing menu starting June 15, 2020
- **Biochemistry – see Appendix below**
 - **Special biochemistry and Drugs of Abuse Testing will remain limited**
- No patients will be denied service.

NOTE: We are reviewing our operations daily as we strive to provide appropriate care for our patients of Saskatchewan in these uncertain times.

Physician and Care Provider Action Required:

- Discontinue non-essential tests based **on your clinical judgment**.
- Limit all orders to those which are required for **immediate patient management**.

SHA Laboratory Medicine site service disruptions of testing and phlebotomy collection access are updated for viewing daily on the following website: <https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/news/service-alerts-emergency-events>

Appendix: Limited Test Orders

Biochemistry

- **Some additional restrictions to SPECIALIZED TESTING have been implemented:**
 - Protein Electrophoresis- *Please avoid screening at this time.* Diagnostic and follow up testing available.
 - Specialized biochemical tests that require **approval** include:
 - Trace elements (Selenium, Chromium, Copper, Zinc, etc)
 - Vitamin D, Citrate urine, Oxalate urine, Porphyrins urine, Renal Calculi
 - Drugs of Abuse Screens (Urine) at RRPL: Please submit a Requisition and a completed and signed '**Medically necessary drugs of abuse screen criteria during covid-19'** form.
Form can be found on the RRPL compendium under "Sample Collection and Packaging Information on the RRPL website"
[https://rrpl-testviewer.ehealthsask.ca/SCI/Sample Collection and Packaging Information/UDS Criteria during COVID-19 v1.0.pdf](https://rrpl-testviewer.ehealthsask.ca/SCI/Sample%20Collection%20and%20Packaging%20Information/UDS%20Criteria%20during%20COVID-19%20v1.0.pdf)

Exceptions to any of the above can be made in consultation through Biochemist on call:

Regina:

Saskatoon:

Please consider syndromic management of common clinical presentations and follow guideline recommendations for empiric therapy when appropriate.