University of Virginia Health System

**Medical Laboratories**

***“Quality You Expect, Service You Deserve”***

***LABORATORY MEDICINE UPDATE***

February 3, 2016

**Respiratory Pathogen Testing Update**

As of January 25, 2016, the Clinical Microbiology and Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory is offering the Verigene Respiratory Pathogen (RP) Flex assay performed on nasopharyngeal (NP) swabs for the detection of common respiratory pathogens.  This testing replaces the assays previously utilized to perform Influenza, RSV, and broad respiratory pathogen testing.  *This testing allows the full respiratory pathogen panel to be available on demand* ***for NP swabs only***.

The procedure for ordering respiratory pathogen testing on NP swabs has not changed.  The following test options remain available in Epic:

* Influenza A and B PCR: Detects Flu A and Flu B. FluA subtype provided if H1 (includes 2009pH1N1) or H3 subtype
* Respiratory Syncytial Virus by PCR
* Respiratory Virus Panel by PCR: Includes FluA/B (with H1/H3 subtypes), RSV, Adenovirus, Human Metapneumovirus (hMPV), Parainfluenza 1 – 4, and Rhinovirus/Enterovirus

Result reporting has changed:

* Influenza A subtype 2009 pH1N1 (pandemic strain) is no longer reported separately from Flu A seasonal H1.  Based upon circulating strains since 2009, a report of Flu A subtype H1 is most likely the 2009 pH1N1 strain.
* If Flu and/or RSV PCR tests are requested in addition to the Respiratory Virus Panel by PCR on the same nasopharyngeal swab sample, the Flu and/or RSV PCR will be cancelled/credited and all targets will be reported from the Respiratory Virus Panel by PCR.
* As in years past, seasonal testing for Influenza alone will only be offered from November 1st to mid-April (or until confirmed cases are no longer reported in our area).  The full respiratory pathogen panel (including Influenza) will remain available year-round.

 Acceptable nasopharyngeal swab types are as follows:

* Preferred sample is flocked mini-tip swabs in Universal Transport Medium (UTM)
* Mini-tip polyester aluminum swabs in Viral Transport Medium (VTM) or Universal Transport Medium (UTM) are also accepted.

**Testing Schedule:** Testing will be performed on demand 24/7 *for NP swabs only* with a turnaround time of approximately 4 hours.  The testing schedule for other specimen types (i.e. BAL, etc.) has not changed.

 Please contact the Clinical Microbiology Director on call at PIC 1221 with questions.

**Reminder: Submission of Cytology Specimens**

Please submit a copy of the **paper** EPIC transmittal with any specimen sent for Cytology testing to the Core Lab Central Receiving (tube station 711) to facilitate appropriate processing and forwarding of the sample to the correct laboratory area.

**Specimen Acceptance Policy (MCP # 0083)**

Please note that the following section of Medical Center Policy 0083 applies to both in-patient and out-patient locations. Samples from different patients should be placed in separate bags. Smaller bags may then be consolidated into a large bag for easier transport.

*Section 1 (d):* Only one patient’s specimens shall be placed in each small plastic bag used to transmit such specimens to the laboratory; multiple specimens for a single patient may be placed together in the same small plastic bag. Under no circumstances should specimens for more than one patient be placed in the same small bag. Multiple small plastic bags may be placed in one large plastic bag. The large bag may contain several small-bagged specimens for the same patient or multiple patients.

**Change in Reporting Urine Drugs of Abuse Confirmation Results**

As of January 4, 2016 the Toxicology Laboratory began reporting quantitative confirmation results for Opiates (codeine, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, morphine, oxycodone, oxymorphone) and Amphetamines (amphetamine, methamphetamine, MDMA, MDA). Any positive urine drug screen performed by the Toxicology Laboratory is reflexed to confirmation using either gas chromatography-mass spectrometry or liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry. If the specimen has a concentration equal to or greater than the established drug cutoff concentration it will be reported as a quantitative result with an interpretation of positive. If the specimen has a concentration less than the established drug cutoff concentration the interpretation will be negative. Specific drug cutoff values are:

Opiates: <100 ng/mL

Amphetamines: <100 ng/mL

Please note: specimens with a positive urine drug screen result are reported with a comment **Refer to Confirmation Result** and therefore should not be acted upon until the confirmation is verified. Please contact the Toxicology Laboratory Director, Lindsay Bazydlo, Ph.D., if you have any questions.