



Update
Expanded Covid-19 Testing
March 25, 2020

Dear Health Care Provider,

Warde Medical Laboratory (WML): WML has begun Covid-19 testing at their facility. As local partners, WML has granted first access to the Michigan Regional Healthcare Ministries (RHMs) to help rapidly pilot the roll out. To avoid overwhelming test capacity at WML, local RHMs will phase in WML Covid-19 testing according to newly released guideline (see table 1 below).

In Phase One, RHMs will offer the test in Epic to in-patients and emergency room departments (priority 1). Any capacity over this cohort will go to outpatient requests. RHMs will give preference to Outpatients (Priority 1 & 2) who are healthcare workers with symptoms or high-risk, benefiting medically from a rapid result. If you have a patient in need of high-priority rapid testing, call **734-712-3141** for approval. Otherwise, we randomly fill the remainder of the capacity from Outpatient orders. We expect to increase the availability of WML Covid-19 testing to outpatients as the pilot stage moves into full production. Expected turn-around time is 1 to 3 days (variable upon demand), and WML will perform testing 7 days per week. Collection requirements are unchanged. **The Warde test code in Epic is LAB7887 (COVWD) SARS-COV-2 RNA, QUALITATIVE REAL-TIME RT-PCR, RAPID**

Quest Diagnostics Outpatients (QD): QD is also engaged in increasing their testing capacity through an automated analyzer. RHMs will offer the new QD option through WML to outpatients, either by Epic or Miscellaneous orders when Epic is not an option. Expected turn-around time is 3 to 4 days. Collection requirements are unchanged. **The QD test code in Epic is LAB7886 (COVNP) SARS-COV-2 RNA, QUALITATIVE REAL-TIME RT-PCR, UPPER RESPIRATORY**

Quest Diagnostics (QD) Lower Respiratory Samples (Sputum & BAL) from Inpatients : QD will perform RNA, qualitative real-time RT-PCR on lower respiratory tract specimens such as sputum and BAL. However, NP specimens are preferred for routine Covid-19 testing. To order this test, place a miscellaneous order in Epic with the request "**COVID testing Lower Respiratory**".

- *Other testing options:* Testing is still offered through the Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Service (MDHHS) Laboratory. If testing is required from the state, you must call 888-277-9894. They require a Patient Under Investigation (PUI) form to be completed.
- *Older pending tests:* A fair number of tests that were sent out more than a week ago are still pending. We expect at least 3-4 additional day delay for these results. This is due to the unprecedented demand for testing and the lack of readily available automated methods. Again, testing at Warde and new automated methods at Quest will help TAT going forward. For inpatients whose results are pending, judicious recollection for testing at Warde may be appropriate.
- *Specimen Requirements:* One Viral Transport Media (VTM) containing only a Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab. Oropharyngeal swabs (OP) are no longer required. Some test kits will come pre-packaged with both an NP and OP, while others will come only with an NP. **PLEASE ONLY SUBMIT THE NP.** Placing both swabs into the VTM may critically reduce the amount media and desiccate the specimen. Please ensure that the swabs are snapped/cut off at the breakpoint to allow for the VTM Cap to be tightened. Break off the swab so less than 3 inches of swab remains in the tube. The swabs should not be in contact



with the cap. **Failure to properly tighten the cap could necessitate a re-collect of the specimen.**

- *Number of specimens to submit:* Maximum 1 viral transport specimen with ONLY an NP swab. If flu testing is needed, we will use the media from the single VTM for outpatients and a dry swab for ER flu tests. With a shortage of available VTM tubes, we are seeking to conserve media.
- *Results:* Results will be reported through usual reporting mechanisms. Results will be available in Epic and interfaced EMRs. Positive results will be called to Non-ER providers.
- *How to transport:* Refrigerate the VTM tube. Do not freeze the specimen.
- *Who should be tested:* Please see **Table 1** below with recommendations on prioritizing testing.

As with our previous communication, please be aware that the Covid-19 testing situation is complex and fluid, and these instructions are current for today. Our goal is to compliment testing from commercial laboratories, by bringing limited, rapid Covid-19 testing in-house for patients requiring admission and for medical staff. We are working as quickly as we can to develop rapid in-house testing, however, we expect this to be functional in early May 2020 and we will up-date you when in-house testing becomes available.

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Table 1
Recommendations from HHS: Who Should Get Tested?

There are three categories for States and clinical laboratories to utilize as they develop strategies to prioritize COVID-19 testing in their communities:

Priority 1 Testing for COVID-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospitalized patients - Healthcare facility workers with symptoms
Priority 2 Testing for COVID-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patients in long-term care facilities with symptoms - Patients over age 65 years with symptoms - Patients with underlying conditions with symptoms - First responders with symptoms
Priority 3 Testing for COVID-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critical infrastructure workers with symptoms - Individuals who do not meet any of the above categories with symptoms - Healthcare facility workers and first responders - Individuals with mild symptoms in communities experiencing high numbers of COVID-19 hospitalizations
Non-Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals without symptoms