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October 29, 2021

Re: Stool testing for bacterial pathogens (except *C. difficile*) is being transferred from Shared Health Clinical Microbiology Laboratories to Cadham Provincial Laboratory (CPL)

Dear Practitioner,

This memo is to inform you that as of November 15, 2021, all stool samples requiring bacterial pathogen culture should be sent directly to CPL. **This change does not include testing for *C. difficile*.** Shared Health Clinical Microbiology Laboratories in Winnipeg (Health Sciences Centre, St. Boniface Hospital) and Brandon (Westman Laboratory) will continue to perform *C. difficile* testing on site.

When testing for both bacterial pathogens and *C. difficile* is required, two (2) stool samples need to be collected and submitted separately to the appropriate testing laboratory (one sample for bacterial pathogens to CPL and a second sample for *C. difficile* to Shared Health) using separate requisitions specific for each laboratory (the CPL requisition for bacterial pathogens and the Shared Health requisition for *C. difficile*).

Stool testing for bacterial pathogens performed at CPL routinely include *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *Campylobacter* and Shiga-toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (e.g., *E. coli* O157). If other bacterial pathogens are suspected, please note this on the requisition.

All stool samples for parasitology and virology testing will continue to be sent to CPL as in the past. There is no change to parasitology or virology testing.

Important Notes

Stool samples sent to CPL for bacterial pathogen culture and liquid, diarrheal stool samples for *C. difficile* **must each be submitted in a sterile container (no transport media) such as an orange top urine container.** Samples for bacterial pathogens received in transport media (e.g., Cary-Blair transport media) will be rejected by CPL and samples will require recollection in a sterile container.

Stool samples for bacterial pathogen culture from patients hospitalized for >72 hours at the time of collection will be rejected, unless a request is made to the CPL physician on call.

Bacterial pathogen stool culture reports from CPL will be received as an LIS fax report and/or in eChart and will not appear in EPR for hospitalized patients at this time. Shared Health Clinical Microbiology Laboratories will continue to report *C. difficile* results in both eChart and/or EPR as in the past.

As we make this transition, CPL will temporarily accept Shared Health Clinical Microbiology requisitions for bacterial stool culture until January 31, 2022. At that time, all laboratory users should be familiar with this change and should have switched their practice to using the CPL requisition when sending a stool sample requiring culture for bacterial pathogens.

Please ensure that the specimen container label includes the patient's PHIN or date of birth, and complete name **or the specimen will not be processed.**

Sincerely,



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