Dear Healthcare Partner:

On March 4th, 2020, the CDC updated the Criteria for Evaluating and Reporting Persons Under Investigation (PUI) for COVID-19. We would like to provide you with step by step guidance regarding approval and submission of testing. PLEASE KEEP THIS REFERENCE AVAILABLE.

Criteria to Guide Evaluation of PUI for COVID-19

The new criteria for evaluation of PUI recommends that clinicians should use their judgment to determine if a patient has the exposure history and signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 to warrant testing.

Decisions on which patients receive testing should be based on:

1. Epidemiologic factors that could have put patients at risk for exposure to SARS-CoV-2, such as:
   a. Any persons, including healthcare workers, who have had close contact with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient within 14 days of symptom onset
   b. Persons with a history of travel from affected geographic areas within 14 days of symptom onset

2. The clinical course of illness
   a. Most patients with confirmed COVID-19 have developed fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing).
   b. Clinicians should have already performed testing for other respiratory pathogens, such as influenza and a respiratory panel test, prior to considering COVID-19 testing.

Until commercial and healthcare facility-based lab testing is available, the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) remains the only lab able to perform COVID-19 testing in Michigan and all testing must be approved by public health. If you have a patient that meets the clinical and epidemiologic criteria for testing, as described above, the process for testing is as follows:

1. Provider requesting testing calls the communicable disease nurse at their local health department to request approval for COVID-19 testing of a PUI. The CD nurse will consult with the Medical Director of the health department when needed.
2. If the local health department agrees testing may be indicated, the provider will be asked to complete the Michigan 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Person Under Investigation (PUI) and Case Report Form available at: www.michigan.gov/coronavirus in the “For Health Professionals” section.
3. Once the PUI Report form is completed and returned to the health department, the health department will contact MDHHS CD Division to approve testing.

1 Relevant affected areas will be defined as a country with at least a CDC Level 2 Travel Health Notice; see https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/
4. If testing is approved by MDHHS, an “nCoV ID” for the PUI will be obtained. This nCoV ID will be communicated to the provider. **NOTE:** Specimens cannot be shipped to the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) until an nCoV ID is assigned.

5. A Microbiology/Virology DCH-0583 order form must be completed by the submitting facility and sent with the specimens. This order form is available at: [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0583TEST_REQUEST_7587_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/DCH-0583TEST_REQUEST_7587_7.pdf)
   a. When completing the DCH-0583 form, select “Other” in the “Tests that require MDHHS approval” and write in “COVID-19”. Enter the nCoV ID that was provided (see #4 above) in section 8 on the back of the form.

**Image of Microbiology/Virology DCH-0583 order form**

Highlighted areas would be completed

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**Review of Sampling and Shipping to MDHHS BOL:**

CDC recommends collecting and testing upper respiratory (nasopharyngeal AND oropharyngeal swabs), and lower respiratory (sputum, if possible) for those patients with productive coughs. Induction of sputum is not recommended. Maintain proper infection control when collecting specimens.
Sputum
Have the patient rinse the mouth with water and then expectorate deep cough sputum directly into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile, dry container. Place sputum container inside a 95kPa transport bag with absorbent material square.

Nasopharyngeal swab AND oropharyngeal swab (NP/OP swab)
Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts. Place swabs immediately into sterile tubes containing 2-3 ml of viral transport media. NP and OP swabs must be submitted in separate vials with transport media. Swabs that are received dry, without transport media, are not able to be tested. NP and OP specimens should be kept in separate vials. Place VTM tube (tighten cap) in plastic bag with absorbent material square. Place sample(s) in 95kPa transport bag.

Label each sample with Patient name, date of birth, and source (i.e., NP, OP, or sputum)

Packaging:
Refrigerate all specimens – DO NOT FREEZE – until ready to ship by the most rapid means to the laboratory. Ship specimen(s) within 24 hours of collection.

Complete the Shipping Label and apply it along with a “Refrigerate Upon Arrival” label and the Biological Substance label to corrugated shipping box containing specimen(s), pre-frozen coolant, test requisition(s), and polystyrene foam container. See specimen submission guidelines, labels for printing, at https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71551_2945_5103_5278-14793--00.html

Results:
Results will be sent from MDHHS BOL to both the ordering provider and the local health department. Positive results from MDHHS BOL are considered PRELIMINARY and must be confirmed by the CDC lab.


Sincerely,

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Central Michigan District Health Department serves Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon Counties.