



Eastern
Health

MEMORANDUM

To: All Newfoundland & Labrador Physicians & Nurse Practitioners
Date: February 17th, 2021
Re: Changes to Lab Testing Services
From: Biochemistry Department, Laboratory Medicine, Eastern Health

Dear Colleagues,

The rapidly evolving situation concerning COVID-19 and the challenges it is placing on laboratory staff and other resources requires us to respond by making changes to how certain testing services are delivered. These measures are temporary but important to the continued offering of these services:

- **ALL requests for routine urine drug screening (UDS42) will have a rapid screen for drugs of abuse done instead.** Requests for urine buprenorphine (Suboxone) will be processed as usual. This will begin immediately and continue until we have a new routine drug screen ready for use.
- **ALL reflexive testing for MMA based on low and low normal vitamin B12 levels will be postponed until further notice.** This service will resume, as soon as possible, but we anticipate up to three months' delay for results. We advise clinicians to base therapeutic decisions on vitamin B12 levels alone in the interim.
- **All samples for urinary free cortisol must be submitted in a container without additive.** All new samples collected for urinary free cortisol and containing acid or other inappropriate preservative will not be processed. Recollection will be advised.
- **All requests for 25-hydroxy vitamin D will be temporarily referred out of province.** This will begin immediately and will impact where results are found for this test in Meditech and possibly other electronic health records.
- **All requests for urinary metanephrines are being referred out of province.** This is one of the most sensitive tests for pheochromocytoma and must **NOT** be ordered with less sensitive tests, like urinary catecholamines, for screening purposes. This test also has limited stability so only urgent requests should be considered at this time.

We apologize for the inconvenience this will cause, but these actions are necessary at this time.

Thank you for your understanding.

Kindest Regards,

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