

LAB ALERT #10: SARS-CoV-2 TESTING UPDATES (3/16)

Shortage of Specimen Collection Supplies: The South Dakota Public Health Laboratory (SDPHL) has been notified that facilities throughout South Dakota are facing shortages of specimen collection supplies. The SDPHL is receiving small shipments of specimen collection supplies which are immediately distributed around the state. The SDPHL supplies are very limited but we are committed to providing as many collection kits as possible to our clinical partners. Additional updates regarding specimen collection kit availability will be provided in subsequent Lab Alerts.

Shortage of Critical Testing Supplies: The SDPHL maintains a complex inventory of supplies required for SARS-CoV-2 testing. Like public health laboratories across the country, SDPHL is now facing significant shortages of critical supplies required for nucleic acid extraction. The SDPHL is working with the CDC, FDA, and vendors across the country to acquire critical supplies for testing. Should supply limitations continue to escalate, the SDPHL will be forced to triage specimens for SARS-CoV-2 testing. The SDPHL will continue to communicate frequently and openly with all clinical partners should specimen triage be required in the coming days.

Specimen Triage for SARS-CoV-2 Testing: To-date, the SDPHL has provided testing for specimens collected from mildly symptomatic patients to severely symptomatic patients that require hospitalization. If the SDPHL is forced to triage specimens, the following patient groups will receive priority:

- Healthcare workers and first responders
- Individuals who are 65 years of age and older
- Individuals with underlying medical conditions

The SDPHL is committed to working with clinical partners to ensure our most vulnerable citizens receive SARS-CoV-2 testing. The SDPHL will continue to communicate frequently and openly about possible changes to our public health testing program for SARS-CoV-2.

Result Notification: The SDPHL is working with clinical partners around the state to implement optimized result notification strategies to meet the needs of the patients we serve. In addition to “Positive” results for SARS-CoV-2 testing and beginning immediately, the SDPHL will provide unofficial notification of results by phone for the following patient populations:

- All test results for hospitalized patients (if indicated)
- All test results for healthcare workers including first responders (if indicated)

Reminder: In an effort to ensure individuals tested for SARS-CoV-2 have received their test results before statewide cases are reported, the SDPHL strongly urges health care providers to evaluate and streamline their internal result reporting processes.

Please distribute this LAB ALERT to others in your facility that may need this information.