## Influenza – Important Testing Updates for the 2019/2020 Season

Welcome to *In the Loop*, the
newsletter from
UnityPoint Health –
Des Moines
Laboratories.

The purpose of this newsletter is to distribute valuable information to our service area, including new test availability, test updates regarding methodology, specimen collection, and normal values.

We may also include feature topics related to laboratory diagnostics and test utilization.

If you have suggestions for topics you would like to read about in the newsletter, please email <a href="Miniperly.VonAhsen@unitypoint.org">Kimberly.VonAhsen@unitypoint.org</a>

Per the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Flu Surveillance as of the week ending January 4, 2020: Nationally, B/Victoria viruses are most common followed by A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses. However, the predominant virus varies by region and age group. There is a low circulation of A(H3N2) and B/Yamagata viruses).

A number of methodologies for detecting influenza viruses in respiratory specimens are available in the clinical laboratory. The most common are called "rapid influenza diagnostic tests (RIDTs)." RIDTs work by detecting the parts of the virus (antigens) that stimulate an immune response. These tests can provide results within approximately 10-15 minutes but are not as accurate as other flu tests. Therefore, a patient could still have the flu, even though the rapid test result is negative. Other flu tests are called "rapid molecular assays" that detect genetic material of the virus. Rapid molecular assays produce results in 30 - 60 minutes and are more accurate than RIDTs.

Rapid Molecular assay (PCR) for influenza is **PREFERRED** over rapid antigen test (RIDT) for *hospital based patients*. Rapid antigen testing is still useful and prevalent in the ambulatory setting; however, additional confirmation of negative results using a rapid molecular assay may be necessary if clinical symptoms indicate an influenza related illness.

## Effective January 15th, Testing Available for Hospital Based Patient

- o includes Emergency Department, Inpatients, and Hospital Outpatient Departments
  - 1. Influenza A /B by PCR

Respiratory Filmarray Panel which includes influenza A/B and other respiratory pathogens

Epic Order Code: LAB3147

Epic Order Code: LAB3222

## Performance Characteristics for Influenza A & B

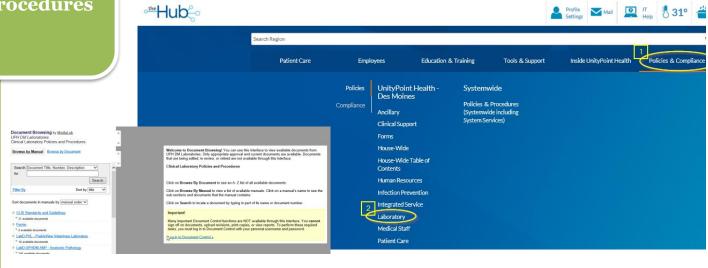
Test		Sensitivity	Specificity	On Board Test Time *
Influenza A & B by PCR [LAB3147]	Influenza A	98.1	98.5	25 mins
	Influenza B	100.0	99.3	
Respiratory FilmArray	Influenza A	100.0	100.0	60 mins
Panel [LAB3222]	Influenza B	100.0	99.9	

\*On board test time is the actual time on the instrument. This does not include collection, transport, or processing time.

The Rapid influenza A/B antigens will be restricted from ordering on hospital based patients beginning Wednesday January 15<sup>th</sup>.

## Did You Know?

Laboratory Policies and Procedures Laboratory Policies and Procedures are available in read only mode from the UPHDM Hub under the Policies & Compliance Tab or by direct link at UPHDM Laboratory (MediaLab)



Ever wonder what location to choose when completing an Occurrence Report? Below are some helpful descriptions.

Occurrence Reporting (RL) Lab Locations

- <u>Lab Blood Bank</u>: this is specifically for blood transfusion, blood product related issues and any issue occurring in the Blood Bank (Iowa Lutheran, Iowa Methodist and Methodist West).
- *Lab Histology*: this is specially for Histology and Cytology samples (Iowa Lutheran, Iowa Methodist and Methodist West).
- <u>Lab Hospital</u>: all issues related to collection at the hospital and laboratory testing performed in the hospital laboratories (Iowa Lutheran, Iowa Methodist and Methodist West). (EXCLUDING Blood Bank and Histology)
- <u>Lab Non Hospital (Path Lab Ankeny)</u>: all issues related to collection at the Pathology
  Laboratory draw stations located at Lakeview, North Ankeny and Downtown. Issues related to
  laboratory testing performed at Pathology Laboratory.