
SUBJECT: Changes to PHO Specimen Collection Supply Availability
Date: March 24, 2026
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To: Primary Care Providers
From: Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health

- **On April 1, PHO will stop providing many specimen collection supplies.**
- **Pertussis and Chlamydia/Gonorrhea kits will still be available from PHO.**
- **Order viral PCR kits from Supply Ontario (PPE Supply Portal).**
- **WDGPH is still exploring alternative no-cost supply options to address gaps.**

Beginning April 1, PHO will no longer provide most specimen collection supplies (swabs, etc.) for public health laboratory testing. Only the following will remain available to order after April 1:

- Bordetella Pertussis (whooping cough) Kit (Kit #390052)
- Chlamydia/Gonorrhea NAAT Testing Kits (Kits #300316, #300317)

These kits can be ordered using [PHO's requisition form](#), available on their website.

For all other specimen collection, PHO advises health care providers to purchase supplies from external vendors and has provided a [reference list](#) of potential suppliers. Note: LifeLabs does not provide supplies for public health testing done at PHO.

The decision to stop offering these supplies was made by Public Health Ontario. WDG Public Health and other health units were not consulted.

For viral PCR testing (measles, mumps, varicella, mpox, flu, COVID-19, etc.):

WDG Public Health has confirmed that specimen collection kits will be available at no cost through the [PPE Supply Portal](#) at Supply Ontario, including:

- Nasopharyngeal PCR Test Swab Kit (substitute for PHO Kit#390082)
- Deep Nasal/Nasal/Throat Swab Kit (substitute for PHO Kit#390081)

Consult PHO's [Test Information Index](#) for details about specimen collection from different sites.

If your office is not already registered with the PPE Supply Portal, please contact the Supply Ontario Point of Contact at SCO.Supplies@supplyontario.ca or 1-888-444-9102.

For other supplies needed for public health lab specimens: Please let us know (HCP Line: 519-822-2715 x7111). WDG Public Health is working to maintain no-cost access to supplies where possible while identifying simpler supply pathways.

This change affects the availability of specimen collection supplies only. PHO will continue to accept specimens and perform laboratory testing for infectious diseases as usual.

For more information, please contact:

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