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**SUBJECT:** Updates to Multiplex Respiratory Virus Testing  
**Date:** July 30, 2021  
**Pages:** 2  
**To:** Hospitals, Primary Care Providers  
**From:** Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health & CEO

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**Multiplex respiratory virus PCR (MRVP) testing is now available for children under 18 years old seen in the emergency department, hospitalized patients, outbreak-associated patients, and patients in institutions not in outbreak with acute respiratory illness (ARI).**

Previously, Public Health Ontario (PHO) MRVP testing was only routinely available for persons tested in intensive care unit (ICU)/critical care unit (CCU) and remote communities. The following changes to MVRP testing were effective as of July 26, 2021.

To support enhanced respiratory virus surveillance, MRVP testing will be available for:

1. Symptomatic children (<18 years old) seen in the emergency department (ED). This testing, which is generally not required for clinical purposes, will be re-evaluated in fall/winter 2021.
2. All symptomatic hospitalized patients (ward and ICU/CCU).
3. Specimens from the first four symptomatic patients in an outbreak that request respiratory virus testing will be tested by MRVP.
4. Symptomatic patients tested in institutional settings (non-outbreak) will be eligible for MRVP testing when ordered on the PHO laboratory requisition.

## Test requisitions

MRVP testing requests for patients with ARI in the setting described above should be requested using the [COVID-19 and Respiratory Virus Test Requisition](#).<sup>1</sup> **Please only choose one of the three test options (section 5). The patient's setting and symptoms must be indicated on the requisition.**

Testing for other patient settings have not changed.

More information about the respiratory virus testing can be found at: [Respiratory Virus Test Information Sheet](#).<sup>2</sup>

For further information, please contact the PHO Laboratory Customer Service Centre at 416-235-6556 or 1-877-604-4567 (toll-free), or by email at [CustomerServiceCentre@oahpp.ca](mailto:CustomerServiceCentre@oahpp.ca).

**WDG Public Health Physician Advisory**  
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**References:**

1. Public Health Ontario. COVID-19 and Respiratory Virus Test Requisition. Available at: [https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/lab/2019-ncov-test-requisition.pdf?la=en&sc\\_lang=en&hash=D35F58C2E4225413933D8BA66FB8E0A1&cldee=bmljb2xhLm1lcmNlckB3ZGdwdWJsaWNoZWZsdGguY2E%3d&recipientid=contact-135485b8444be41180d400155d027703-223b671f30d04fc5b2b0cd44064c3a11&esid=37270174-9bed-eb11-8bc5-0050569e118f](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/lab/2019-ncov-test-requisition.pdf?la=en&sc_lang=en&hash=D35F58C2E4225413933D8BA66FB8E0A1&cldee=bmljb2xhLm1lcmNlckB3ZGdwdWJsaWNoZWZsdGguY2E%3d&recipientid=contact-135485b8444be41180d400155d027703-223b671f30d04fc5b2b0cd44064c3a11&esid=37270174-9bed-eb11-8bc5-0050569e118f)
2. Public Health Ontario. Respiratory Viruses (including influenza). Available at: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/laboratory-services/test-information-index/virus-respiratory?cldee=bmljb2xhLm1lcmNlckB3ZGdwdWJsaWNoZWZsdGguY2E%3d&recipientid=contact-135485b8444be41180d400155d027703-223b671f30d04fc5b2b0cd44064c3a11&esid=37270174-9bed-eb11-8bc5-0050569e118f>

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