



Canterbury Health Laboratories

Swine flu PCR requesting

03 August 2009

Canterbury Health Laboratories (CHL) CHL would like to assist DHB's with demand management of H1N1 testing.

The CHL Virology is dedicated to providing a high quality service to clients with timely reporting of results.

In the last few months the emergence of Influenza A (H1N1) 2009 has seen a significant increase in workload for the virology laboratory performing the WHO recommended testing of a specific molecular test (PCR).

Since the advent of the current influenza pandemic, CHL has fulfilled testing needs of primary care providers, public health physicians as well as hospital clinicians, in line with the recommendations released by the Ministry of Health.

Most areas in New Zealand are now in "manage it" phase; however the laboratory is continuing to receive a high volume of requests for H1N1 testing.

To ensure appropriate turn around time of results for patients in high risk groups the laboratory will focus provision of H1N1 testing for patients whom a positive or negative result will make a clear difference in terms of their clinical management.

To achieve this laboratory requires the support of all involved medical practitioners and referring laboratories to restrict molecular testing for H1N1 for patients who require major interventions because of the severity of their illness.

CHL offers a service for rapid testing of respiratory specimens by direct immunofluorescence for Influenza A and B, Parainfluenza 1, 2 and 3, Respiratory Syncytial virus and Adenovirus, which can provide a reliable positive result in a 2-3 hour timeframe."

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact either Lance Jennings (lance.jennings@cdhb.govt.nz) or Anja Werno (anja.werno@cdhb.govt.nz).

Kind regards,

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