



# Eastern Health

To: All RHA and Health Care Workers in Newfoundland and Labrador

From: Public Health Microbiology Laboratory (PHML)

Re: Change in Microbiology Laboratory Services at the St. John's site between December 23, 2021 to January 9, 2022

The current surge in COVID19 cases with the Omicron variant has resulted in an unprecedented surge in specimens to the PHML and to adjust to this demand, effective December 23, 2021 at 1600, non-urgent serology, outpatient (including ERs) stool GI multiplex testing, urine and wound/ throat/genital (except for prenatal GBS screening) swabs for culture and sensitivity or drinking water microbiology testing will NOT be processed.

The specimen report will be finalized as "Test Not Performed Due to Ongoing COVID Outbreak".

This policy will be effective until January 9, 2022 and may need to be extended beyond this date.

***Laboratory services also respectfully asks health care workers to refrain from calling and asking for COVID19 results and/or when the specimens will be processed and reported. Calls pull staff from the bench to answer the phone.***

***This slows everything down.***

***Results are entered automatically into Meditech as soon as they are completed.***

This necessary service adjustment is to re-deploy front line bench staff to process COVID19 specimens in a timely manner in the face of the evolving outbreak across the province.

Only if there is a clinical or other urgent matter, please contact the Microbiologist on Call (MOC) via hospital locating or by email at [microbiologistoncall@easternhealth.ca](mailto:microbiologistoncall@easternhealth.ca)

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

