



Respiratory Virus Community Testing

With the winter season upon us and the associated increase in respiratory virus circulation we would like to provide updated guidance on diagnostic testing. This is tempered by the fact that funding for this type of testing is limited and must be targeted at the most sick and vulnerable patient populations primarily those requiring hospitalisation.

What this means in the community is that testing is severely limited and only available after consultation with a Clinical Microbiologist or Infectious Diseases Physician.

- SARS-CoV-2 testing – if you suspect your patient has COVID-19 infection then you should perform a rapid antigen test (RAT) for this virus. There is no community funding available for SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing.
- Influenza testing – testing should be limited to those patients that are to receive anti-viral treatment and have been discussed with a Clinical Microbiologist or Infectious Diseases Physician to gain prior approval for the test.
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) testing – testing for this virus in the community setting is not normally required and should not be requested. It is available within the hospital setting for patients requiring admission.

We thank you for assisting us in the appropriate use of these tests in a community setting.

Drs Michael Addidle, Vani Sathyendran, Vivian Black
Clinical Microbiologists

Murray Robinson
Service Lead Microbiology & Molecular Pathology

CLINICAL UPDATE

Please ensure all members of your institution receive a copy of this clinical update.

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