

Further information on pharmacy-based asymptomatic COVID-19 testing program

PROGRAM UPDATES

Pharmacy information change requests

The list of participating pharmacies is updated on a weekly basis. To update the information for your pharmacy, please complete the Pharmacy COVID-19 Program Change Request Form posted on the online pharmacy providers resources section available at <https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-resources.php>.

Travel related testing

Individuals requesting asymptomatic COVID-19 testing for travel related purposes and who require supporting documentation must be referred to an AHS testing centre.

Out-of-province/out-of-country

Individuals who inquire about asymptomatic COVID-19 testing who do not have an Alberta Personal Health Number (common examples are individuals from out-of-province, out-of-country, here for work, here for travel, etc.) must be referred to an AHS testing centre.

Results notification

- As there may be a number of health care providers involved in the care of individuals and with a number of different health care providers offering testing for COVID-19, there have been concerns raised about appropriate and available opportunities to access COVID-19 test results. All tests for COVID-19 are submitted under the name of an authorized ordering clinician. That ordering clinician is able to access and disclose results to their patients. For tests that are ordered under the authority of a Medical Officer of Health pursuant to the Public Health Act, results are provided to the patient via provincial processes operated by Health Link and Public Health.

- If a health care provider is not the authorized ordering clinician for a COVID-19 test for a patient but has an ongoing relationship with that person for clinical care, it would be appropriate for them to access and disclose the results of the test to their patient. This may include the patient's primary care clinician, another clinician as required as part of a patient's clinical assessment or a pharmacist with an ongoing clinical relationship to that patient. Any health care provider disclosing results to a patient should be familiar with appropriate health information to provide the patient. Confidential health care information, such as COVID-19 lab results, should not be accessed or disclosed by health care providers who do not have an ongoing clinical relationship in that patient's care.
- In addition to the above, all Albertans have the opportunity to sign up for MyHealth Records (<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/myhealthrecords>) to be able to access their COVID-19 results themselves online. It can take several days to be granted access to this portal, so it is best to do so in advance of being tested.

Sample collection and analysis

- Collected throat swabs that are sent to Alberta Precision Labs (APL) for processing must be labelled according to the guidelines provided and the requisition completely filled out as per the instructions in the APL Pharmacy Information Package.
- Samples will be rejected and testing not performed on the sample if it is received
 - o unlabeled (incomplete information on the sample label);
 - o mislabeled (mismatch between patient sample and information on the requisition);
 - o with a requisition missing key information (such as full patient name, initials are NOT accepted); or
 - o with a sample that has leaked due to insecure capping of the sample vial.
- Pharmacists will receive a report indicating testing was not performed on samples that do not meet sample acceptance criteria and are cancelled.
- Cancelled test data is collated for each pharmacist and reviewed weekly to identify patterns and areas of concern. There will be subsequent follow-up with pharmacists showing a higher than acceptable percentage of cancelled tests.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Enrolment

- Pharmacists enrolling in the Asymptomatic COVID-19 Testing Program are reminded that they should read through the program document, Alberta Precision Labs (APL) pharmacy information package and enrolment checklist in their entirety to ensure they are aware of all the steps for enrolment and for program operations.
- Pharmacists who submit their Healthcare Provider Information forms to APL without their laboratory practice identification number (PRAC-ID number), will NOT be processed. If you have misplaced your PRAC-ID or need to acquire a PRAC-ID, please refer to the enrolment checklist or program document which outlines the steps required.

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- A Health Care Provider form must be submitted for each pharmacist and for each location that a pharmacist will be collecting patient samples. A unique millennium ID number will be assigned to the pharmacist that is specific to that location.
- A pharmacist working in multiple pharmacies will require a form for each physical address. This will ensure the patient results are sent to the correct location.
- APL will deploy the first order of testing supplies to the pharmacist after successful enrolment in the program. This will take an estimated seven to 10 business days. As shipping times may vary depending on location in the province (please anticipate three to five business days), pharmacists are reminded NOT to book appointments for testing until such time that supplies are on site and available. Failure to do so may result in an asymptomatic individual not being tested as they may not have an opportunity to book another appointment.

Sample drop-off

- Samples are to be dropped off at Patient Collection Centres (PCC).
- Samples are NOT to be dropped off at any Acute/Urgent care location unless the pharmacy is located in an area where Acute/Urgent care centres are the only option.

Contacts for questions

Questions regarding enrolment status in the Asymptomatic COVID-19 Testing Program should be directed to Alberta Precision Labs at 403-770-3438. Please allow for seven to 10 business days to allow for processing. All questions regarding program operations and billing should be directed to Alberta Blue Cross at the numbers listed below. Please do not contact RxA or ACP regarding program enrolment, operations or billing unless it is an issue specific to the mandate of these organizations (i.e. standards of practice).

When you have questions:

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at:

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area) • **403-294-4041** (Calgary and area) • **1-800-361-9632** (toll free)

FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area) • **FAX 1-877-305-9911** (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefits and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims. Visit ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php

