

COVID-19 Update

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November 19, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

In order to provide updates on the evolving response and best practices related to the COVID-19 pandemic, AHP will be delivering brief, critical updates on an ongoing basis addressing important highlights and frequently asked questions.

Changes to AHP Call Schedule for Thanksgiving Week

Please note that next week's COVID-19 Response call will be held on Tuesday, November 24th, from 12:15 to 1:00 pm. To accommodate this change to the schedule, there will be no AHP Behavioral Health call next week. Both calls will resume their normal schedules the week of November 30th.

Office-Based Testing Platform Availability

Prior feedback from our community provider indicates that there is a large interest in office-based COVID testing platforms that are on par with lab-based PCR testing. Although there are two platforms (Cepheid and Roche) that meet this criteria, only the Roche cobas® Liat® system may be available for procurement by AHP in a reasonable timeline.

AHP has reached out to the Roche sales team, and they are willing to consider extending hospital/lab client status to AHP in order to grant our network access to group purchasing pricing. Each system is a one-time \$10,000 capital cost with test kits running between \$20 and \$45 per specimen depending on the test being performed (the COVID/Flu A/Flu B kit is \$43 per test). AHP is seeking to assess interest from our community providers as to:

1. Whether there is a desire to perform in-office COVID testing?
2. Would practices be interested in a group purchase program for a Roche system if made available to us?
3. What is the average volume of COVID and/or influenza tests your practice would imagine performing per month?

Of note, these platforms do allow for strep testing, chlamydia and gonorrhea screening in addition to COVID, influenza, RSV and other rapid tests with an average processing time of 20 minutes per specimen. Test kits for any of these tests can be purchased directly through existing supply chain contacts (Medline, McKesson, etc.). **If you are interested, please reach out to [Chad Teeters](#) so we can assess the level of interest and need.**

Resources from 2nd School and Community Healthcare Forum

If you missed the 2nd School and Community Healthcare Forum earlier this week, you can view a recording of the event [here](#). The event was hosted by Common Ground and other education and healthcare stakeholders and featured important updates about COVID-19 screening and response in the school setting.

Also featured during the forum were the following downloadable documents, available in both

English and Spanish:

- [COVID Testing Infographic](#): summary of in-school COVID testing requirements
- [Keeping Kids Healthy...and Schools Open Infographic](#): colorful patient handout or office poster reinforcing strategies for preventing COVID transmission.

Updated Summary of Quarantine Travel Guidance and Essential Workers

Quarantine travel guidance as it relates to healthcare and other essential workers has been [recently updated by NYS DOH](#):

Quarantine requirements for all travelers

- Travelers must test within three days prior to arrival in NY, quarantine for three days upon arrival, re-test on day four of arrival
- If negative test on day four of quarantine, the individual may exit quarantine.
- States that are contiguous with New York continue to be exempted from quarantine protocol — essential workers also continue to be exempted
- Travelers who were only out of state for less than 24 hours **do not need to quarantine** but must get a test on day four of arrival back in NY

Requirements for healthcare and other essential workers

- Essential workers continue to be exempted from the new travel quarantine rules in relation to their work
- Essential workers should test ideally within 24 hours of return and may come to work if asymptomatic, but are placed on twice daily active monitoring (symptom and temperature checks)
- These individuals do have to quarantine outside of work for the full 14 days, but may pursue the quarantine travel testing outlined if desired for earlier release from quarantine outside of work.

Any asymptomatic testing in this instance is not covered by insurance. If an essential worker does test positive for COVID-19, they are isolated and must stay out of work. Employers should note that employees will forgo their paid sick leave benefits from New York's COVID-19 paid sick leave law if they engage in non-essential travel to any states other than contiguous states from the time of return to New York until the end of the required period of quarantine or isolation.

UR Medicine Extends Pre-Procedure Testing Timeframe to Five Days

To assure tests are completed prior to surgery and decrease the strain on UR Labs, UR Medicine is **extending the timeframe for pre-surgical testing to within five days of the actual surgery/procedure, effective immediately**. This includes ALL outpatient elective surgeries or procedures, including those that require anesthesiology care.

REMINDER: COVID Testing at UR Medicine Urgent Care

As the demand for testing continues to grow, the availability of COVID testing at UR Medicine locations is undergoing some modifications:

- **Pre-procedure testing**: Patients may be sent to the four UR Medicine Labs locations listed [here](#). **Patients should be provided with a paper requisition to bring with them to the test site**. This option will only be available to patients whose procedure will be conducted at a UR Medicine facility or at the office of an AHP-participating specialist.
- **Symptomatic testing**: Symptomatic patients may continue to be referred to UR Medicine Urgent Care with a physician order. **Patients should be provided with a paper requisition to bring with them to the test site**.
- **Asymptomatic testing**: Testing of asymptomatic individuals performed, for example, to meet travel guidelines or to satisfy requirements for college students returning to campus, will not be available at UR Medicine Urgent Care. These patients should be directed to the state-operated location at MCC.

Please note that the pre-procedure testing locations document located [here](#) has been updated to remove a number of Rochester Regional testing sites that are no longer performing nasopharyngeal swabs.

COVID Testing

Clinical Guidance - Serologic Testing

Primary care providers may consider ordering IgG antibody testing for:

- Individuals who have fully recovered from COVID-19 who are interested in donating convalescent plasma
- Pediatric patients with suspected or confirmed Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)
- Patients who had illness suggestive of COVID but who were unable to receive PCR testing

Referring patients to UR Labs collection site for phlebotomy may be difficult due to volume of patients able to be accommodated, so community providers are advised to draw in the office and send the tube (SST or standard red top tube) to the lab. For more information about the methodology and performance of UR Labs' testing assay, click [here](#).

Reimbursement Guidance - Serologic Testing

The only patient cohort for whom health insurance will reliably cover serologic testing are those patients who had symptoms consistent with COVID infection but who were unable to receive PCR testing, and thus antibody testing is being used to confirm prior COVID exposure. Provider claims for medically appropriate COVID-19 testing MUST be submitted with one of the following codes: CPT® codes U0001, U0002, U0003, U0004, 0202U, 86328, 87635, and/or 86769. These codes may be billed with diagnoses of B97.29, U07.1, Z03.818, and/or Z20.828 when appropriate.

Clinical Guidance: PCR Testing

In addition to testing for symptomatic healthcare and other essential workers and long term care residents, primary care providers may consider testing for the following patients:

- Mild to moderately symptomatic patients
- Patients whose living arrangements are not amenable to isolation (e.g., multi-generational household, limitations of physical space, etc.)
- Patients whose employers require evidence of testing either to return to work or to access benefits related to COVID status
- Patients who will be undergoing an aerosolizing procedure (e.g., exercise stress test, endoscopy procedure, transesophageal echocardiography [TEE])
- Pediatric patients with symptoms suggestive of Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)
- Children with complex health needs whose specialized childcare providers (e.g., Daystar) require testing prior to returning

Antigen Testing

New York State recently updated their recommendations about potential allowances for use of COVID antigen testing in the schema for verifying COVID status. At this time, antigen testing is most helpful in hotspots and areas where a significant increase in testing is required (ZIP codes or school districts with high prevalence of COVID-19). With lower prevalence of COVID-19, the predictive value and risk of false negative testing remains high when using antigen or molecular testing compared with PCR. **A negative COVID antigen test requires a COVID PCR test to definitively remove the patient from isolation for presumed COVID.** Therefore, at this time we do not see a significant utility for antigen testing, but we will continue to update these recommendations as prevalence and recommendations evolve.

There is increasing variability in how rapidly results of PCR tests are being returned based upon where the study is resulted. UR Labs are currently resulting all studies internally with results expected within 72 hours or fewer. We will continue to update on testing availability and processing time as information changes.

We continue to partner with Dr. Mendoza and County Health Department officials on preparedness and response protocols and will convey information as it becomes available.

Thank you for your continued collaboration in this important public health endeavor.

All the best,



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Practice Resources on ahpnetwork.com

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[Payer Information Archive](#)

[Pediatric Resources Archive](#)

[Telemedicine Resources Archive](#)

[COVID Pharmacy Archive](#)

[Back to School Archive](#)

COVID-19 Resource Links

[Golisano Children's Hospital Coronavirus Information for Families](#)

Project Teach: Seven Ways to Support Kids and Teens Through the Coronavirus Pandemic, in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Site](#)

[Monroe County Health Department](#)

[CDC Coronavirus Site](#)

[New York Department of Health Coronavirus site](#)

COVID-19 Online Databases

- [Greater Rochester Area COVID-19 Tracker](#)
 - [Monroe County COVID-19 Dashboard](#)
 - [NYSDOH COVID-19 Tracker](#)
 - [NYS Nursing Home Fatalities](#)
 - [CDC Coronavirus Interactive](#)
 - [Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Dashboard](#)
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