



Date: January 24, 2020

To: All Clients

**From: Wesley Kim, M.D., Medical Director
A. Chris Whelen, Ph.D., VP & Technical Director of Microbiology and Molecular**

RE: 2019 Novel Coronavirus Specimen Collection

The Department of Health released a Medical Advisory on January 21, 2020 regarding the evaluation of patients who are suspected to be infected with 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) associated with Wuhan, China.

Instructions explicitly state that providers must contact the DOH immediately for consultation if they have a patient who may be infected with 2019-nCoV. Specimens for 2019-nCoV are NOT to be collected prior to this consultation; however testing for other respiratory pathogens like influenza or RSV should not be delayed. DOH will determine if a patient will be placed under investigation (PUI) for 2019-nCoV.

According to The State Epidemiologist, for now DOH intends to handle each report on a case by case basis. For diagnostic testing, the two nasopharyngeal NP swabs (2) are probably the most critical specimens to be collected on a PUI. Sputum and serum can likely be collected later under more controlled conditions if the patient remains under investigation or is confirmed positive.

Be advised that DLS Patient Service Centers, draw centers, or roving phlebotomists do not meet DOH facility or personnel criteria for collecting specimens. Please do not direct patient to these locations.

Testing is only available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta and specimens must be sent to the Hawaii State Laboratories. DLS reference laboratory testing methods do NOT detect 2019-nCoV.

If you have any other questions please call the appropriate Hawaii Dept of Health number below:

- Oahu (Disease Reporting Line)..... (808) 586-4586
- Maui District Health Office..... (808) 984-8213
- Kauai District Health Office..... (808) 241-3563
- Big Island District Health Office (Hilo)..... (808) 933-0912
- Big Island District Health Office (Kona).....(808) 322-4877
- After hours on Oahu.....(808) 600-3625
- After hours on neighbor islands..... (800) 360-2575 (toll free)