May 16, 2023

RE: SARS-CoV-2 test criteria changing at the WSLH

After more than three years, the world is now in a very different stage of the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. COVID-19 Public Health Emergency has ended,¹ and the World Health Organization has determined that COVID-19 no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern.² As COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to decline, public health organizations are updating their approaches to the disease. In addition, SARS-CoV-2 testing is widely available at health care facilities and through at-home testing. Therefore, the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) is transitioning SARS-CoV-2 test criteria to be in line with testing for influenza and other respiratory viruses at the WSLH.

Beginning on June 12, 2023, WSLH will only test samples for SARS-CoV-2 that meet the following criteria:

- Surveillance samples requested by the WSLH
  - WSLH currently requests that each clinical laboratory submit 5 positive SARS-CoV-2 samples per week
- Post-mortem cause of death investigations
- Public Health outbreak investigations as directed by state, local, and tribal public health departments. Pre-approval is required.
- Other testing as directed by public health departments

Samples that meet the above criteria will be tested using a multiplex assay that includes SARS-CoV-2, influenza A, and influenza B. Submitters will receive results for all three of these viruses.

Sincerely,

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