

Monday 19th May 2020 1600 hours

Important information for all General Practices, Community Pharmacies, Community Nursing and Aged Care Facilities – Please share this with everyone in your team

Laboratory Changes to Collection Centres and Available Virology/Microbiology Testing

- Collection centres are now open (except for Christchurch Health Laboratories main laboratory site on Hagley Ave – instead, the collection facility in the Outpatients building across the road will be open 7.30 to 4.30pm).
- Significant changes will be made to available virology testing as the lab scales back up to usual services for all tests over the coming weeks, with most available again already. There are some changes (e.g. microbiologist approval for Arbo) due to the current travel restrictions. Further information is on [HealthPathways > COVID-19 Impact on Local Services](#).

Requests for Canterbury DHB Funded Services and Investigations

- You are now able to refer routine patients to Canterbury DHB services as usual. If you have any requests parked in ERMS, please 'unpark' and send them through.
- Canterbury DHB are going to progressively put routine elective (planned care) requests into a new patient management system for review. Routine requests will remain in the PMS until, or if, DHB services have the capacity to see them. You will notice new letters that do not provide certainty of date or service as DHB capacity may vary greatly over the next year or two.
- Acute, urgent and high suspicion of cancer requests will go to services without delay.
- If you have any questions please contact the Planned Care Team at cdhb.request@cdhb.health.nz.

Change to Self-Isolation Information

- After being tested for COVID-19, patients are considered a 'suspect' case until they receive a negative result. They must go straight home after their test and stay in self-isolation until they get their result. Other people in their household do not need to self-isolate unless they are told otherwise by Community & Public Health.
- This advice has been agreed locally and is consistent with messaging being given to the public by Healthline. We are aware the latest case definition from the Ministry of Health has given conflicting information around self-isolation for household members and this has been fed back to them. In Canterbury we would like you to follow the advice on HealthPathways and guide your patients to HealthInfo.

Influenza Immunisations

- Prescribers, please be aware that from 18 March 2020 accredited pharmacists have been able to give funded influenza immunisations to eligible people aged 13 years and older, including those with certain chronic conditions. Further information about those eligible for a free influenza immunisation can be found on [HealthPathways > Influenza Immunisation](#).
- A reminder to all vaccinators to promptly enter immunisation details into the NIR website/ImmuniseNow. This is particularly important for those with chronic conditions, so that reminders are not sent out to those who have already been vaccinated. Pharmacists, as per the consent form, please contact the patient's general practice if there is any doubt about suitability for vaccination, such as those patients who have recently undergone cancer treatment.

Kind regards,

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