



Technical Bulletin

Outsourcing Ova and Parasite Test for Intestinal Parasites

TO: Medical Staff and Clients

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SUBJECT: All Ova and Parasite (O&P) testing will be sent to a reference laboratory

DLS discontinued in-house O&P for outpatients in 2014 because it was very time consuming and rarely yielded a parasite. We did however maintain the capability to detect *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium* by immunofluorescence (test codes 4719 and 6231, respectively). We also provide worm identifications (test code 4107) and pinworm exams (test code 605).

Testing for the small number of inpatient submissions was maintained over concern that the average TAT of 9 days would lead to delayed diagnosis and suboptimal outcomes. We recently made an assessment in order to validate or refute this concern.

We audited 15 months of data beginning in Jan 2021, and found only 2 of 479 (0.4%) were positive for parasites. All were incidental findings to the primary medical problems. Of 616 specimens sent to our reference lab during a recent 3-month period, none were positive for parasites.

Because intestinal parasites in our inpatient and outpatient population is extremely rare, and the impact of a longer TAT for **negative** O&P results is minimal, we have decided (in consultation with Infectious Diseases and the Queen's Clinical Laboratory Utilization Committee) to outsource this testing for inpatients beginning June 06, 2022. Test codes 603 (stool) and 4108 (non-stool) will be inactivated, and will automatically redirect to the reference test code 5216.

Test codes remain the same for *Giardia* (4719) and *Cryptosporidium* (6231), worm identifications (4107), and pinworm exams (605).

The current paired 10% formalin/PVA submission containers will continue to be used and may be replaced by a single Total-Fix ® transport vial as we attempt to minimize the use of formalin in the laboratory.

Please refer any questions to Terrie Koyamatsu, Manager - DLS Microbiology Laboratory at 589-5196, or DLS Client Services at 589-5101.

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