



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR GPS, MIDWIVES AND PUBLIC HOSPITAL CLINICIANS**

### **When do the changes take place?**

The change to a two provider system took place from 19 October 2009.

### **What am I supposed to do with referrals for testing?**

Patients will look to you to direct them to the correct provider. This remains Labtests in the vast majority of cases. The **only** exception is if you have a patient in a rest home who is immobile and unable to attend a collection centre. Their needs will be met by DML.

Patients may be confused about where they should go following the change to two providers. We seek your support in directing them to Labtests.

### **Do I need to do anything in my practice after the changeover?**

No. You should continue to use your Labtests referral forms. There is no need to change your practice management systems or IT systems. Results will continue to be reported by Labtests. Where a private specialist has asked that you receive copies of test results that will also be reported to you by DML.

### **Will I get copies of results from tests ordered from DML?**

Yes. Where a private specialist has asked that you receive copies of test results they will be reported to you by DML.

### **Are there any changes to the National Cervical Screening Programme contract as a result of the two provider system?**

No. DML will be continuing to provide services for the greater Auckland region under the National Cervical Screening Programme contract. To ensure that your ThinPrep specimens are processed in Auckland by DML, please place them into the blue "DML Cervical Cytology" box along with the Cytology request form.

### **My practice includes a rest home. Who will be providing tests?**

If your rest home patient is mobile, then they should be referred to a Labtests collection centre.

The exception to this is when a patient is deemed immobile, either long-term or with a short-term incapacity. In this case, home or on-site collects will be undertaken by Diagnostic Medlab (DML).

While on site DML will only collect specimens from those patients identified as being immobile. They will not collect from any other patient who wants the convenience of collection on site but is deemed mobile.

The patient is bed ridden or otherwise restricted and would not normally leave the rest-home. In a sense (housebound)

This can be for a current temporary illness and therefore for a limited time or permanent due to a long term condition.

The presenting condition may be due to the patient being mentally and or physically compromised. In reference to the mental condition an example would be a patient who has severe Alzheimer disease and not able to contend with the external environment.

### **I am going to get pressure from patients wanting to go to DML.**

The ARDHBs will be going to some lengths to explain the new system to the people of Auckland. However, we understand that not everybody will appreciate the message and it is likely you will get asked to provide referrals to DML. Flyers will be provided for you to give to patients explaining why this cannot be done.

We appreciate you will be fielding questions from patients and we thank you in advance for your patience and your assistance.

### **What if my patient wishes to pay to go to DML?**

DML is not funded to provide this service. There is also no current facility for you to pay DML to do your tests. DML only covers tests requested by private specialists, private hospitals, private fertility clinics and tests for immobile patients in rest homes.

All other community testing remains with Labtests and your GP, midwife or a specialist in a public hospital, will continue to refer you to a Labtests collection centre.

### **I have patients who have no confidence in the system and even with the changes they will not want to be referred to Labtests.**

We understand that it will take more than words to persuade people to have confidence in the new system. As the new system gets underway, the ARDHBs will be reporting back to you on a regular basis on feedback we are receiving as well as any concerns raised. Confidence will only be won if you and your patients can see measurable performance improvements and ongoing measures will be in place.

As part of the process, both providers will be reporting to the medical community and the public on an agreed set of key performance safety and quality indicators and progress to achieve them. These will be issued monthly and will enable clinicians and the public to see for themselves the improved standards which the new contract will deliver.

The KPIs cover:

- Collection centre waiting times and volumes
- Call centre performance
- Home visit performance standards
- Laboratory turnaround times for urgent and non urgent tests
- Reporting of urgent and critical results
- Reporting of non-urgent results
- Complaint resolution.

## Exceptions to the usual

- Private birth and midwifery provider, **Birthcare**, will remain with Labtests for all of their testing requirements.
- Private **fertility services** and **Fertility Plus** will have all laboratory services provided by Diagnostic Medlab.

## Where do I go if I have a question?

- For general enquiries, please call 0508 LABTESTS (0508 522 837)
- For results, please call 0508 LAB RESULTS (0508 522 737).
- For DML queries, please call 09 571 4000
- Information on the two providers' service can be accessed on [www.dml.co.nz](http://www.dml.co.nz) and [www.labtests.co.nz](http://www.labtests.co.nz).
- General Information is also available on 0800 557 572, which is the DHB call centre.