

# MLS Laboratory Update: Reporting Changes to Influenza B Genotyping Results

OCTOBER 30, 2024

## Purpose of this Message:

Alert MLS laboratory partners to a change in the Minnesota Department of Health-Public Health Laboratory (MDH-PHL) reporting of influenza B genotyping test results.

## Action Item:

Inform all relevant personnel in your facility that effective October 30, 2024, the MDH-PHL will no longer be reporting influenza B genotyping results to submitters.

## Background:

Specimens submitted by clinical laboratory partners to the MDH-PHL are an essential part of Minnesota's respiratory virus surveillance program, allowing further characterization of respiratory viruses, including influenza genotyping and subtyping. The MDH-PHL has utilized the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) assay, Human Influenza B Lineage Genotyping Kit for *in-vitro* diagnostic (IVD), use to characterize influenza B positive specimens. Due to the changing epidemiology and the exclusion of influenza B/Yamagata from seasonal vaccines used in the USA, the CDC has discontinued production of the IVD kit and is recommending the use of an alternative research-use-only (RUO) kit for B lineage genotyping that meets surveillance reporting requirements. RUO results will be used for surveillance and reported to the CDC but are not for individual diagnostic purposes.

With production of this kit under RUO labeling, influenza B genotyping results cannot be provided to individual submitters. However, aggregate surveillance data can be viewed at: [Weekly Influenza and Respiratory Activity: Statistics](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/flu/stats/index.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/flu/stats/index.html>).

## Important Notes:

- Influenza A subtyping testing remains unchanged, and results will continue to be reported back to submitters.
- Laboratories should continue submitting **ten** influenza-positive patient specimens (either A or B) each week for surveillance purposes to the MDH-PHL.

**Questions:** Please contact: Dr. Sarah Namugenyi, Virology Unit Interim Supervisor; 651-201-5691 or [Sarah.Namugenyi@state.mn.us](mailto:Sarah.Namugenyi@state.mn.us) or Dr. Anna Strain, Infectious Disease Laboratory Manager; 651-201-5035 or [anna.strain@state.mn.us](mailto:anna.strain@state.mn.us)

*THIS IS AN UPDATE FROM THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH – PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY (MDH-PHL) AND THE MINNESOTA LABORATORY SYSTEM (MLS). THIS MESSAGE IS BEING SENT TO MLS LABORATORY CONTACTS SERVING MINNESOTA RESIDENTS. YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO REPLY TO THIS MESSAGE.*

*\*\*PLEASE FORWARD THIS TO ALL APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL WITHIN YOUR INSTITUTION AND HEALTH SYSTEM\*\**

*THE CONTENT OF THIS MESSAGE IS INTENDED FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL AND RESPONSE PARTNERS WHO HAVE A NEED TO KNOW THE INFORMATION TO PERFORM THEIR DUTIES. IT IS FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE BEYOND THE INTENDED RECIPIENT GROUPS AS DESCRIBED IN THIS MESSAGE.*

Minnesota Laboratory System  
Minnesota Department of Health, Public Health Laboratory  
601 Robert St. N, St. Paul, MN 55164-0899  
651-201-5200  
[health.mnlabsystem@state.mn.us](mailto:health.mnlabsystem@state.mn.us)  
[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/mls/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/mls/index.html)

*To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5200.*