

New requirements and criteria - Requests for Urgent & Rapid SARS-CoV-2



Health
Pathology

14th September 2021

Dear Colleague

We are regularly receiving requests to change a SARS-CoV-2 request to an urgent or rapid after it has already been received in the laboratory. It is not possible, due to the high volume of tests we receive on a daily basis, to change our testing order. To assist with prioritising of test orders we have put in place the following criteria.

Requesting an URGENT SARS-CoV-2 test (TAT 6-10 hours)

Where results are required urgently, it must be noted as urgent at the time of ordering in eMR and on the pathology request form together with clinical notes stating the reason, and the name and provider number of the requesting doctor. Example below of how to mark a request as urgent

- “URGENT – HEALTH CARE WORKER” (or “URGENT – STAFF”)
- “URGENT – INPATIENT” (for all inpatients including ICU, ED, delivery suite etc)
- “URGENT – PREGNANT”
- “URGENT – RESIDENTIAL CARE” (e.g. nursing home resident)
- “URGENT – JUSTICE HEALTH” (for patients residing within a correctional facility, or Justice Health staff)

Requesting a RAPID SARS-CoV-2 test (TAT 1.5 hours)

There is a current worldwide shortage of rapid testing cartridges for the Cepheid GeneXpert and as such, requests must only be considered for those patients where a result would permit life-saving intervention, including:

- Where urgent initiation of non-invasive ventilation (NIV) is required.
- For urgent organ and tissue donation (donors and recipients).
- For pregnant women requiring urgent caesarean section.

ID approval is not required to request a rapid test but if severe shortages occur, then restrictions will be re-applied.

Requests for rapid tests must be received with a request form clearly marked and specifically stating:

“RAPID TEST”

- Clinical notes stating the reason for the tests .

All specimens with request forms marked incorrectly or without clinical notes will not be prioritised. We appreciate your understanding.

For further information

Further information: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/communities-of-practice/Pages/guide-rapid-prc-testing.aspx>

Please contact the laboratory on 9382 9133 if you have any further questions.

