NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Statewide Standing Order for COVID-19 Diagnostic Testing

Revised January 5th, 2022

This standing order authorizes any North Carolina licensed healthcare provider, in accordance with the conditions of their licensure, (including a physician, advanced-practice provider [nurse practitioner, certified nurse midwife, physician assistant], registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, licensed pharmacist, licensed dentist), and trained unlicensed personnel working under the supervision of a physician, advanced-practice provider, registered nurse, licensed pharmacist, or licensed dentist, in accordance with the conditions of their licensure, at a healthcare facility, pharmacy, medically-supervised, or other COVID-19 testing site in the state (collectively, "testers") to collect a respiratory specimen for COVID-19 diagnostic test, this standing order authorizes the healthcare facility, pharmacy, or testing site that submitted the specimen for COVID-19 diagnostic testing to receive the results of the test directly from the testing laboratory. This order is in no way is intended to authorize a healthcare provider to practice outside their legally defined scope of practice.

COVID-19 Testing	
Condition or Situation	Patient (or parent/legal guardian on behalf of patient) presents requesting and consents to COVID-19 diagnostic testing.
Assessment Criteria	
Assessment Criteria	Patients shall be tested for COVID-19 based on the conditions of this order.
Plan of Care	
Actions	**1. Patient Education and Data Collection** a. Prior to collecting the specimen from the patient, the testing site shall provide anticipatory guidance regarding testing to the patient, which at minimum shall include: i. The manufacturer's authorized Fact Sheet for Individuals receiving the COVID-19 test, as it is available. • Fact Sheets for Individuals for molecular COVID-19 tests • Fact Sheets for Individuals for antigen COVID-19 tests ii. Where, how, and when to obtain the test result; iii. Information on control measures to follow while waiting for the test result and to follow if the test result is positive, based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance; iv. Information on what to expect from the Contact Tracer who will be in touch following a positive test result; v. Information on what to do and how to access medical care if the patient has or develops symptoms and how to link to a medical home; and vi. Information on resources, such as access to shelter or food, if needed to adhere to control measures. b. Prior to collecting the specimen, the testing site must collect: i. Data required to be reported in accordance with 10A NCAC 41A .0107. For more information on reporting and key data fields, see this guidance.

	ii. The name and contact information of the patient's primary care provider, if available.

	2. Specimen Collection, Testing, and Test Results a. Consent must be obtained from the patient or the patient's legally authorized representative. If the patient is under age 18, minor consent may be obtained in accordance with G.S. 90-21.5. b. Testing sites shall collect a specimen for a COVID-19 diagnostic test approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or authorized by the FDA through an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). c. See *Contraindications for Use of this Order* section of this standing order. d. Before collecting the specimen, don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). The type of PPE should be based on the type of test collection procedure and the testing location and include strategies to minimize transmission. e. Follow specimen collection, specimen storage, and testing methodologies required by the manufacturer and/or laboratory partner. • Review the manufacturer's Instructions for Use (IFU) and Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers, as they are available, for the molecular COVID-19 test or antigen COVID-19 test you will be using. • Review the CDC's guidance on Collection and Handling of Specimens. f. Follow CDC guidance for "How to collect anterior nasal specimen for COVID-19". g. If collecting nasopharyngeal (NP) swab specimen, follow recommendations for "Obtaining Nasopharyngeal Swab Specimen." ** CDC recommends collecting only the NP specimen, although an OP specimen is an acceptable specimen type. If both NP and OP specimens are collected, combine them in a single tube to maximize test sensitivity and limit use of testing resources. h. If a deviated septum or blockage create difficulty in obtaining the specimen from one nostril, use the same swab to obtain the specimen from the other nostril. i. If submitted to a laboratory, the testing sites shall direct the laboratory to return the test result to the testing site.

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Follow-up	**3. Follow up and Contact Tracing** a. The test result must be reported to the patient by a trained representative of the testing site or made available by the testing site as soon as possible, but no more than 24 hour after testing site receiving result. The testing site shall also provide the test result to the patient's primary care provider, if available. b. Antigen test results that are reported to public health departments must be clearly distinguished from other COVID-19 tests, such as NAATs and antibody tests. c. All positive and negative tests must be reported pursuant to GS 130A, Article 6, 10A NCAC 41A .0101, and 10A NCAC 41A .0107. For more information on reporting, see this guidance. d. If the test result is positive, inform the patient of the control measures that should be implemented based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance. Explain the subsequent contact tracing process, reinforce the confidentiality and safety of this process, and encourage the patient to follow up with contract tracers in an expeditious manner. Provide any information collected regarding household and close contact names to the local health department to facilitate contact tracing.
Contraindications for Use of this Order	There are no specific contraindications for collecting specimens. However, if the patient has had recent nasal trauma or surgery, has a deviated nasal septum or has a history of chronically blocked nasal passages or severe coagulopathy creating difficulty in obtaining a nasopharyngeal specimen, a physician or advanced practice provider (nurse practitioner, certified nurse-midwife, or physician assistant) should be consulted to discuss alternative specimen collection procedures.
Criteria or Circumstances for Notifying Medical Provider	Notify the physician or advanced practice provider (nurse practitioner, certified nurse-midwife, or physician assistant) from the organization providing clinical supervision of the testing site for questions or problems.

Approved by: _____ Date approved: 1/5/21
Elizabeth Cuervo Tilson, MD, MPH
NPI: 1760540421

This order is effective immediately upon signing and may be revised or revoked by the State Health Director according to his/her discretion. Legal AuthorityExecutive Order 245 .