

PROVINCIAL LABORATORY SERVICES COMMUNIQUÉ

TO: Island Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Educators and Nurse Managers

FROM: Dr. Greg German, Health PEI Medical Microbiologist
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DATE: June 23, 2015

RE: Island *C. difficile* Testing

C. difficile testing has previously been performed solely at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital by both EIA and PCR methods. This resulted in turn-around-times that were less than optimal – at times more than 72 hours.

The *C. difficile* testing program for the island has undergone changes to improve turnaround time to aid in faster *C. difficile* diagnosis:

- Samples from the western part of the island will be tested at PCH
- Samples from the eastern part of the island will be tested at QEH
- PCH and QEH microbiology laboratories have the capability to offer weekend and STAT testing for *C. difficile*
- If PCR testing is necessary, it will be performed at the QEH, with an increased testing schedule of Monday to Friday
- Reporting changes/clarification:
The components listed on the report (Common Antigen, Toxin Antigen and Toxin PCR) will reflect the type of methodology used to perform the testing and the interpretation of those testing results will be displayed at the bottom of the report (POSITIVE for toxigenic *C. difficile* or NEGATIVE for toxigenic *C. difficile*).

C.difficile Final Report
Common Antigen: Detected
Toxin Antigen: Not required
Toxin PCR: POSITIVE

Interpretation:
POSITIVE for toxigenic *C. difficile*

If you have any questions regarding *C. difficile* testing, please contact the PCH Microbiology Lab (902-438-4280) or the QEH Microbiology Lab (902-894-2300).

<http://www.healthpei.ca/laboratoryservices>