ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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TO: **Local Health Departments**

FROM: Matt Charles Chief, Division of Laboratories
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DATE: December 4, 2017

SUBJECT: Implementation of Extra-Genital screening using Roche cobas® Ct/Ng Assay at the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Division of Laboratories (DOL)

Effective December 1, 2017, the IDPH DOL will begin offering expanded *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (Ct/Ng) screening capabilities to include extra-genital (throat and rectal) samples. The purpose of this memo is to provide guidance to providers who use the IDPH DOL for Ct/Ng testing. In this initial phase, extra-genital screening will only be available to pre-approved sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinic sites (S or K code) and only for their men who have sex with men (MSM) clients. Test submissions will be monitored for compliance. The IDPH STD Section will examine resources after this initial phase to determine possible expansion of extra-genital screening to other clinics and for other clients.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) on Ct/Ng screening, "more than half (53%) of *C. trachomatis* and 64% of *N. gonorrhoeae* infections were at non-urethral sites and would have been missed if the traditional approach to screening of men by testing only urethral specimens had been used." (2014) *MMWR*, 63 (2), 11. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr6302.pdf. In keeping with best practices and current recommendations, it is imperative to offer MSM clients at STD clinics extra-genital screening in addition to the current urine screening especially if the clients indicate that they have engaged in condom-less anal or oral sex. For surveillance and intervention purposes, rectal infections are useful markers to identify clients at greatest risk for HIV infection. MSM clients who are negative for HIV but have syphilis or rectal gonorrhea are excellent candidates for Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).

As a result of this new expanded implementation, specimen collection and submission guidance have changed. See the attachments included in this memo for specific instructions on how to collect and ship urine, endocervical, vaginal, throat, and rectal swabs.

On-line training is available from the IDPH STD Section at: https://idph.adobeconnect.com/std-specimen-collection/ . This training includes instructions on proper collection and submission of all specimen types to the IDPH laboratory. The training also provides information regarding the appropriate collection device which must be used for each sample type. **As a reminder, specimens for patients younger than 14 years of age must continue to use the Hologic Aptima® test since the Roche assay is not approved for those patients. Failure to use the proper collection device will result in an unsatisfactory lab report.**

If you have questions concerning Ct/Ng testing, please feel free to contact the staff at the IDPH Carbondale Laboratory at 618-457-5131 or IDPH STD Section at 217-782-2747.