



UCD National Virus
Reference Laboratory

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Dear Colleagues

2019-nCoV testing is now available at the NVRL. We obtained the primers – as recommended by the WHO – a couple of weeks ago, received positive control material on Wednesday, and have spent the last few days validating the tests.

We will be performing three real-time RT-PCR assays in parallel for all samples. Two of these assays target SARS-like Bat Coronaviruses, and one targets 2019-nCoV. We would expect all three assays to yield positive results in 2019-nCoV infected individuals.

It is our intention to run the assays once daily Monday – Friday for now. As such, the run will commence at 10am each day to facilitate same day results. Samples received after 10am will go on the following day's run. In light of the number of assays being performed, urgent testing will not be available at this time.

Out of hours (OOH) testing during the week will not be available. However, weekend testing will be available on request following appropriate public health agreement. The weekend service must be activated before 1400 hours on the day in question, and can be accessed through the NVRL OOH number, which is on all the HPSC algorithms.

Please note that all testing at this time must be approved in advance by your local Public Health Department. Once testing has been sanctioned, please contact the NVRL to provide the relevant demographic details. This will facilitate the prompt identification of samples on arrival at the NVRL, and ensure as efficient a service as possible.

We are aware that this is an evolving situation, so all of the above will be kept under review. You will of course be kept informed of any material changes.

Finally, we are currently operating on the WHO guidance that lower respiratory tract samples are preferred, especially in those with a confirmed pneumonia or severe illness. That being said, we also appreciate that this will be challenging if sampling is going to be performed in the community. As such, dual nose & throat swabs will be processed in the appropriate clinical circumstances.

If you have any queries in relation to the above, please don't hesitate to contact the NVRL.

Kind regards

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