July 14, 2014

Dear Health Care Providers,

The Alaska State Virology Lab (ASVL) will no longer offer a 3rd Generation Antibody (3rd Gen) test for HIV screening after August 15th 2014, per CDC recommendation.

On June 27th 2014, CDC updated its testing recommendations for the diagnosis of HIV infection. The recommendation endorses the exclusive use of the 4th Generation Antigen/Antibody Combination (4th Gen) test for HIV screening because it is more sensitive and can detect infection earlier. For more information please read CDC’s recommendation at http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/testing/lab/guidelines.

ASVL began using BioRad’s 4th Gen HIV screening test in July of 2012 and this is the test you are now familiar with; however, we also kept the BioRad 3rd Gen test onboard for those few specimens that did not meet the 4th Gen’s more stringent time and temperature specimen requirements. After August 15th, we will only offer the 4th Gen test and all specimens will need to meet the 4th Gen time and temperature specimen requirements.

Here is a review of the BioRad 4th Gen time and temperature specimen requirements:

- Samples may be stored for no longer than 2 days at room temperature or 7 days at 2-8°C including the time that samples are in transit.

- For long term storage, samples may be spun down and the serum or plasma frozen within 2 days at room temperature or 7 days at 2-8°C.

- Samples are to be shipped at 2-8 °C (use a cool Pak) and in compliance with Federal Regulations.

If your facility has difficulty meeting the 4th Gen time and temperature specimen requirements, please call us. I’m sure we can find a way to make this work.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Bond, MS MT
ASVL, Lab Manager
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