

## Joleen Kaminski

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**From:** CLRInfo  
**Sent:** March 26, 2021 2:28 PM  
**To:** Ken McCormack  
**Cc:** Maria Sushkova  
**Subject:** Rapid COVID-19 Point of Care Screening Program

**Importance:** High

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### [CLR Members,](#)

Following our earlier communication this morning, please find an important update on Rapid COVID-19 Point of Care Screening Program.

### [Rapid COVID-19 Point of Care Screening Program](#)

Point-of-care (POC) test kits can be used to rapidly screen people for COVID-19 in select settings to reduce the chances of outbreaks and control the spread of COVID-19.

#### **Point-of-care (POC) test kits are now available to support select screening initiatives in British Columbia.**

Point-of-care (POC) test kits are devices that can be used as a screening tool for COVID-19 in people without symptoms. POC tests are rapid and provide results at the point of testing usually within 15 to 20 minutes. POC tests are more portable, but they are generally less sensitive at detecting COVID-19 infection than standard testing and can miss individuals who have COVID-19, making them suitable for screening programs.

#### **POC screening programs**

POC testing for COVID-19 has been used by Health Authorities in B.C. for public health reasons such as outbreak management for COVID-19. Access to **publicly funded POC tests** has now expanded to include industries and organizations meeting the indications outlined in [BC's Rapid Point of Care Testing Strategy](#).

At this time, administration of POC testing requires trained health care professionals to ensure that important quality standards are met.

When a POC screening program is in place, this does not replace or allow for the relaxing of existing public health measures. Among other things, it means that the use of personal protective equipment and physical distancing must be maintained.

#### **Access Rapid COVID-19 POC tests for screening**

Organizations interested in Rapid COVID-19 POC tests can email [RapidPOCTeam@phsa.ca](mailto:RapidPOCTeam@phsa.ca) for an intake assessment.

Organizations interested in the Rapid COVID-19 POC tests will be required to enter into an agreement with the Provincial Health Services Authority.

Priority will be given to industries and organizations whose settings or activities are associated with an increased risk of transmission of COVID-19 or outbreaks due to high-contact between workers including:

- Food processing plants
- Sites with congregate living
  - Farms with congregate housing
  - Work camps in the natural resources sector.

## Requirements

Industries and organizations approved to use publicly funded POC test kits for screening programs must demonstrate an ability to meet provincial requirements for screening sites. These include:

- Appropriate infection, prevention and control practices
- Identification of local Medical Health Officer (MHO) or designate at local health authority, for mandatory reporting of positive COVID-19 POC results
- Commitment to reporting positive results electronically to local Medical Health Officers within agreed upon timelines
- Establish clinical pathways for confirmatory testing for all positive results, and referral to care
- Appropriately trained staff and regular proficiency testing training
- Comply with quality and safety procedures and protocols
- Comply with regional and provincial documentation and reporting requirements including utilization.

To learn about accreditation and the quality assurance process for point of care testing and requirements to report positive cases to public health, refer to the [Provincial Health Officer letter on Point of Care Testing](#).

## Resources and training materials

- [BC's Rapid Point of Care Testing Strategy](#)
- [Requirements for a COVID-19 Point of Care \(POC\) Screening Site](#)
- [Abbott Panbio Antigen Rapid Test User Manual](#)

CLR will keep you posted as the new information becomes available.

Stay safe.

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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