Regional Medical Laboratory
4142 South Mingo Road
Tulsa, OK. 74146-3632

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Regional Medical Laboratory (RML) clients

FROM: Dr. Cindi Starkey, MD, PhD, Chief of Molecular Pathology, RML Medical Lab Director
Sonja Matthews, MT (ASCP), SC, Director of Clinical Operations
Patti Loykasek, HTL(ASCP),QIHC, BS, Molecular Test Development Specialist

DATE: August 15, 2014

SUBJECT: *Bordetella pertussis/parapertussis* detection by PCR

RML is pleased to announce we are now offering *Bordetella pertussis/parapertussis* testing by PCR in-house. **Acceptable specimens: Universal Transport Media (UTM) with mini-Flocked Swab. Collect a nasopharyngeal specimen.**

We will be **discontinuing** culture and DFA assays for *Bordetella* effective August 15, 2014. **Amies blue cap swab in charcoal media will no longer be an acceptable specimen.**

The PCR assay will utilize primers for *B. pertussis* and *B. parapertussis* DNA from Focus Diagnostics. The assay is a real-time PCR qualitative reaction. PCR testing is more sensitive and specific than culture and DFA testing. Performing the test in-house will reduce the turnaround time and contribute to improved patient care.

Since the 1980s, reported cases of pertussis have steadily increased. In 2012, 48,277 cases of pertussis were reported. The increase in reported cases is likely due to increased awareness, improved clinical recognition, improved reporting, decreased immunization rates and waning immunity. Greater access to improved laboratory diagnostics, especially PCR, also contributed to the increase in reporting.

The PCR assay will detect *B. pertussis* and *B. parapertussis* in one assay. Unlike cultures, the PCR assay does not require viable bacteria to be present in the specimen. Only patients with signs and symptoms consistent with pertussis should be tested by PCR.

Test Name: Bordetella pertussis DNA and Bordetella parapertussis DNA
Order Mnemonic: BOR P PCR
Test number: 5568100
Methodology: Real-time PCR (RT-PCR)
Specimen Required: Universal Transport Media (UTM) with mini-Flocked Swab. Collect a nasopharyngeal specimen.
CPT code: 87798 x2

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Cindi Starkey, MD, PhD, Sonja Matthews, MT (ASCP), SC, or Patti Loykasek, HTL(ASCP),QIHC, BS at 918-744-2553 or 800-722-8077 or via email at Sonja.Matthews@sjmc.org or Patti.Loykasek@sjmc.org