

To: Submitters of Clinical Specimens to the TN Department of Health

From: Dr. Kara Levinson, Laboratory Director

Date: April 11, 2024

Subject: Discontinuation of Molecular Detection of Bacterial Pathogens in Cerebral Spinal Fluid (CSF)

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Effective April 11, 2024, the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) Division of Laboratory Services (DLS) is discontinuing the molecular detection of *Neisseria meningitidis* and *Haemophilus influenzae* directly from cerebral spinal fluid (CSF). We recommend that you consider commercial or reference laboratories for this type of testing when warranted. Alternatively, this testing can still be requested through TDH-DLS with prior consultant/approval with the Bacteriology department at 615-262-6361. Molecular testing for bacterial pathogens in CSF will be coordinated with our CDC designated [Vaccine Preventable Diseases Reference Center](#).

Culture-based testing on isolates from CSF will continue to be performed by TDH-DLS. Per the [Tennessee Reportable Diseases List for Laboratories](#), submit isolates to TDH-DLS within 3 days of detection/isolation of *Neisseria meningitidis* and *Haemophilus influenzae* from CSF. Please refer to the [Laboratory Directory of Services](#) for additional information on specimen/isolate submission and testing.

Questions regarding this change in services may be directed to the Interim Clinical Division Director, Dr. Randal Fowler ([Randal.Fowler@tn.gov](mailto:Randal.Fowler@tn.gov)).

Thank you for your continued partnership.



Kara Levinson, PhD, MPH, D(ABMM)

Director, Division of Laboratory Services