MEDIA RELEASE

CARPHA has the only CARICOM regional reference laboratory accredited to test for COVID-19

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. 7 March 2020. The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) has the only CARICOM regional reference laboratory accredited to test for the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and also the only laboratory that can confirm positive or negative results in Trinidad and Tobago.

We continue to actively work with Ministries of Health in our Member States to provide confirmatory tests for COVID-19.

This is undertaken in strict accordance with guidance and recommendations of the Pan American Health Organization/ World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The Caribbean Public Health Agency’s Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) does not participate in any process of verification or validation of tests with any private laboratories in the Caribbean, nor has it endorsed any tests from any private laboratory, manufacturer or distributor.

Our laboratories are fully equipped and ready to test samples of suspected cases of COVID-19, and Member States have specific protocols to follow in their investigation process which includes sending the samples to CARPHA.

We therefore advise the public to be extremely careful and vigilant when using private laboratory services as conflicting or inconsistent results (false-positive or negative) can be obtained. Please check with your Ministry of Health to verify which laboratory is authorized for testing COVID-19 samples.

CARPHA also urges everyone to take proper precautions for protecting their health.

More information about protective measures against the new coronavirus can be found on the CARPHA website.

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