CARPHA/SDPC/LSN/024/20
Chief Medical Officers
Laboratory Directors
National Epidemiologists

31st March 2020

Dear CMOs, Laboratory Directors and National Epidemiologists,

LABORATORY UPDATE 7: COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)

This is an update to the COVID-19 Laboratory Update 6 circulated on 27th March 2020.

Please be advised that effective Wednesday April 1, 2020, the CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) will temporarily suspend the molecular detection of Influenza A and B viruses for more efficient use of available resources for COVID-19 testing.

Kindly note that the submission of oropharyngeal swabs for COVID-19 testing is now considered optional, therefore, the primary specimen of choice is a nasopharyngeal swab.

REMINDERS FOR COVID-19:

Specimen Requirements: Nasopharyngeal swabs (Dacron or polyester flocked) in Viral or Universal Transport Media, collected up to 5 days from Date of Onset (DOO) of symptoms.

For further guidance please contact us at escobaga@carpha.org or +1 868 324-0869

Turnaround Time: 24 – 48 hours after receipt of samples by CMML

Please visit our dedicated web page for the most recent updates at http://carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus

Yours Sincerely,

Joy St. John
Executive Director

cc: Dr. Gabriel González-Escobar, Head, Laboratory Services and Networks (LSN)
    Dr. Lisa Indar, Assistant Director, Surveillance, Disease Prevention & Control Division (SDPC)