Dear CMOs, Laboratory Directors and National Epidemiologists,

LABORATORY UPDATE 11: COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) USE OF EXPIRED SAMPLE COLLECTION SUPPLIES

This is an update to the COVID-19 Laboratory Update 11 circulated on 3rd April 2020.

Due to the global shortage and disruptions in supply chains for access to sample collection materials such as nasopharyngeal swabs in Universal/Viral Transport Media (UTM/VTM swabs), several Member States have asked for guidance regarding the use of expired UTM/VTM swabs.

Should you decide to use such expired materials, please consider the following –

1) Check the expiration date

2) Verify the integrity of the pouch. If the pouch containing the swab has been opened, then do not use. Discard the item.

3) For those with sealed pouches, verify the colour of the liquid in the collection tube. It must be clear, pink or light red. There should be no observed cloudiness or particles in suspension. Any colour change e.g. a yellow colour, indicates possible contamination and must be discarded.

4) Storage: store the expired swabs at 4-8 °C (refrigerator) until use. Do not freeze the swabs.

5) Expired swabs can be kept once there is no change in pH (colour change) and stored under refrigeration.

6) Ensure the examination of all swabs before use, be guided by points 1-5.

Please be advised that CARPHA cannot endorse the use of expired reagents or supplies. Should you choose to use expired materials, CARPHA cannot accept any responsibility for any possible negative outcomes.
REMINDEERS FOR COVID-19:

**Specimen Requirements:** Nasopharyngeal swabs (Dacron or polyester flocked) in Viral or Universal Transport Media, **collected up to 10 days from date of onset of symptoms**.

Kindly note, **fever** is considered present when the temperature reading is greater than 37.8°C or 100.1 F.

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,

![Signature]

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