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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Local Health Departments, infectious disease physicians, infection control professionals, hospital emergency departments, various provider clinics, urgent care facilities, laboratories

FROM: Communicable Disease Control Section

DATE: July 7, 2022

SUBJECT: Monkeypox Update and Laboratory Testing

To date, 84 cases of monkeypox/orthopox have been identified in Illinois. All but one case have been adult males with a median age of 36 (range of 20 to 66). The majority of cases are among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, although anyone with close contact to a monkeypox case can become infected. All cases reported so far have resided in the Chicago-metropolitan area.

Yesterday, Labcorp announced it will begin testing for monkeypox using the FDA-cleared, PCR-based orthopoxvirus DNA assay, developed by CDC. Labcorp becomes the first commercial lab to provide testing capacity in support of the national effort to increase monkeypox testing access in response to the outbreak. Other clinical laboratories who will be offering the CDC-developed orthopoxvirus testing in the coming weeks include Aegus Science, Mayo Clinic, Quest Diagnostics and Sonic Healthcare. These clinical labs will forward specimens to the CDC and they will do confirmatory testing on a portion of the specimens.

As commercial lab testing becomes readily available, healthcare providers are encouraged to order testing for patients meeting [clinical criteria](#) through these laboratories. [Labcorp](#) is reporting a turnaround time of two to three days from specimen pickup. Patients should be told to isolate until results are known, and if positive, until all sores have healed, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. Providers are to collect two samples from a lesion using sterile dry polyester, rayon or Dacron swabs that should be readily available in most offices.

Testing at IDPH Laboratories will be limited to priority cases and will continue to require the approval of local health departments for both testing criteria and need for priority testing. Patients meeting criteria for testing at IDPH may include persons with severe disease for which treatment would be indicated or at risk for severe disease, such as immunocompromised people, pregnant women or those linked to an outbreak, and will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the local health department in consultation with IDPH. The uncovered costs of testing at commercial labs may also be considered in determining testing priorities at IDPH laboratories.

Providers should report both patients with suspect monkeypox, not yet tested and patients testing positive via commercial labs to their local health departments by phone within 3 hours of

notification. This is so the patient can be instructed to isolate and take measures to protect others around them from becoming infected. Additionally, Labcorp results will be imported into I-NEDSS via Electronic Lab Reporting (ELR). Results that are “Detected,” “Equivocal” or “Inconclusive” will come to local health departments via their Lab/Provider queue. Not Detected results will also be imported and can be accessed by changing the “Report Status” filter in Lab/Provider Reports to “Potentially Reportable” or while in a suspect case, clicking “Find New Lab & Provider Reports.”

Clinicians working in outpatient clinics may be first to evaluate patients with suspect monkeypox as many patients have mild symptoms. Monkeypox may be confused with sexually transmitted infections and varicella zoster virus infection as well as many other rash illnesses. Diagnosis of another sexually transmitted infection does not exclude monkeypox infection; infections may be concurrent. We urge providers to:

- Obtain sexual and travel history,
- Determine if any contacts have/had a similar rash,
- Be vigilant to possibility of monkeypox if characteristic rash present, and
- Use appropriate [personal protective equipment](#)

For additional information on monkeypox, please visit [Information For Healthcare Professionals | Monkeypox | Poxvirus | CDC](#). If you need additional assistance, please contact your [local health department](#).