

# Nova Scotia Point of Care Rapid Antigen Testing Program for Outbound Travel

## Information for Pharmacy Practitioners

The information contained in this document is intended for pharmacies wishing to participate in Covid-19 Rapid Antigen Testing, specifically for Outbound Travel. Community pharmacies continue to play a vital role in the provision of covid-19 vaccinations for Nova Scotians. It is essential that vaccinations continue to be a priority, and is not impacted by the implementation of Covid-19 testing.

### **How does a pharmacy apply to be a testing site? Once approved what are the next steps?**

PANS has collected interested pharmacy names, their contact person and their contact information, and has provided this information to government. We have received word that approval from the Chief Medical Officer has been granted for all of the pharmacy locations that PANS submitted. We will circulate the letters when we receive them but we have been advised that they do not require signature by the pharmacy.

The next step is for pharmacies to review the guidance documents and standard operating procedures found here: <https://pans.ns.ca/covidtesting>.

Every participating pharmacy must have at least one person participate in a live webinar or view the recording (details to be circulated by email) before services are offered. The designated person that has attended from your pharmacy will then be responsible for disseminating information to their teams.

Once a pharmacy has attended the webinar (or watched the recording) and is ready to begin offering testing services, they need to advise PANS at [info@pans.ns.ca](mailto:info@pans.ns.ca) and we will maintain the list of pharmacies that are actively providing testing. The NSH testing webpage will simply refer to the PANS website to identify testing locations.

### **How will the public know where to go for a test? In what circumstances should they go to a pharmacy for a test instead of a public health testing site?**

Nova Scotia Health provides free testing to manage the pandemic in Nova Scotia (ie.symptomatic testing). They do not provide testing for those needing documentation of their results for outbound travel. If they need documentation for travel purposes, they are required to book and pay for a test at one of the sites listed at this webpage: <https://www.nshealth.ca/i-need-covid-test-travel> . It is important not to direct patients to the public health testing program as this is not a funded service.

### **What are the different types of Covid-19 Tests? Which products can be used by participating pharmacies?**

The International Society of Travel Medicine has made their [Clinician Guide to SARS-CoV2 Covid-19 Testing](#) available to all providers. It has a good overview of the pros and cons of the various types of tests.

Pharmacies can choose any of the [Health Canada approved Rapid Antigen Tests](#).

### **What do I charge for the testing service?**

Pharmacies must make arrangements with one of the vendors to purchase a testing system. Some tests may soon be available at wholesalers. Pharmacies must set their own pricing to include cost of the test plus the service.

### **What are the applicable Standards of Practice?**

Covid-19 Rapid Antigen Tests are considered a point of care test. Some tests are approved for patients to collect their nasal swab and pass it to the pharmacy professional to complete the test. If this practice is undertaken, the sample collection must be witnessed by a pharmacy professional. Pharmacists conducting point of care tests must comply with the applicable NSCP Standards of Practice. These include [NSCP Standards of Practice Testing](#). NSCP also has a [Position Statement on Testing for the Purpose of Drug Therapy Management](#). Covid-19 Rapid Antigen testing would fall under testing for 'Untreated Indications'.

Additional Information specific to covid-19 rapid antigen testing, such as the retention of records, patient follow-up and satisfaction of the requirement to notify primary care providers of results outside of the normal range, can be found in the [NSCP Guidance Document – Guidance for Asymptomatic COVID Testing](#).

### **Where can I find Standard Operating Procedures for each test as required by NSCP Standards of Practice for Testing?**

The PANS [Point of Care Testing Manual](#) has been updated to include:

- Abbott PanBio Covid-19 Rapid Antigen
  - Standard Operating Procedures
  - Maintenance and Quality Control Log
  - Training Checklist
  
- BTNX Covid-19 Rapid Antigen
  - Standard Operating Procedures
  - Maintenance and Quality Control Log
  - Training Checklist

The Covid-19 Point of Care Tests will be available to all PANS members at no charge. To purchase the full manual of all other Point of Care Tests, please email [info@pans.ns.ca](mailto:info@pans.ns.ca).

Pharmacies may also create their own Standard Operating Procedure Manual for any of the above tests or additional tests they may be using.

### **What resources are available for patients and participating pharmacies?**

[Patient Consent and Screening for Rapid Antigen Testing](#)  
[Covid-19 Rapid Antigen Test Results Certificate](#)  
[Covid-19 Rapid Antigen Patient Information and FAQ](#)

[Lab Requisition for Positive Test Results Alternate Testing Site for PCR](#)

[Labels for Covid- Testing Kits](#) (for use when multiple tests being done at once)

[ISTM Guide for SARS-CoV2 Testing](#)

[NSCP Standards of Practice Testing](#)

[NSCP Position Statement Testing for the Purpose of Drug Therapy Management](#)

### **Where can I find information about testing requirements for my travel destination?**

Information regarding testing requirements for destination countries can be located here:

<https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/world.php> Requirements for travel are changing frequently

and each destination has different requirements for accepted testing modalities. It is the responsibility of the traveler to check the entry requirements of their destination. Pharmacies are not able to offer advice surrounding travel COVID-19 testing requirements at this time.

### **What do we do if a patient answers 'Yes' to a screening question?**

Patients that answer 'Yes' to screening questions (for example they have cough, fever or 2 or more symptoms of Covid-19), are not eligible for Rapid Antigen Testing for travel and should be directed to the provincial website to book a test. <https://covid-self-assessment.novascotia.ca/en>

### **What is required of patients?**

Patients will be required to wear a mask and bring must bring photo identification. Results are given in person after approximately 15 minutes. Patient can wait if there is adequate space available or return to the pharmacy in 15 minutes for the results.

### **How do I document results?**

PANS has created a template (link found above) to be used to document negative test results. We encourage pharmacies to pre-populate with their pharmacy information and add their own logos. If the result is positive, see the next question.

### **What to do if an individual has a positive COVID-19 POCT result**

- A positive POCT result means the individual may be infected with COVID-19. However, POCTs may occasionally produce false positive results, and the individual will need a regular laboratory PCR test to confirm their result.
- Pharmacy professionals conducting the test are not required to self-isolate and will be contacted by public health with further information if they are considered a close contact. If appropriate PPE was worn, and the professional conducting the test was fully vaccinated, it is expected that impact to pharmacy staffing will be minimal.
- Here are key steps to follow if an individual tests positive at a pharmacy testing site:

1. Inform the individual of their result and outline their responsibility to go home and self-isolate immediately. They must isolate until they receive a negative PCR result or receive further direction from Public Health in the case of a positive PCR result.
2. Inform the individual that they should go to the [online screening tool](#) to book a PCR test at a Public Health Clinic.
3. Provide the individual with a lab requisition for a priority PCR test at a public health testing site to confirm the result. The individual must take the requisition to their booked appointment. Note the lab requisition is a secure document. It will be provided in PDF format and should not be distributed any further than the original recipient.
4. Report all positive results to NSH Public Health via fax with the individual's name, date of birth, health card number, contact information, an indication that the test was positive as well as the date and location of the test (organization name and address). The fax # is:
  - Central Zone area: 902-429-0767 OR
  - Toll Free: 1-833-635-2944

### **Appointment booking**

Pharmacies can decide if they will offer walk-in or pre-booked appointments. PANS strongly recommends appointment booking to ensure you can plan appropriate staffing levels and minimize the number of people in the pharmacy at one time. There are a number of online booking options available. Some examples include:

[Kroll Online Appointment Booking](#)

[MedMe Health Covid-19 Testing Module](#)

[MedEssist Covid-19 Testing Module](#)

### **What PPE is recommended for Covid-19 Testing**

It is recommended that pharmacy practitioners should wear full PPE while performing the test, as per the [NS Guidelines for PPE at Covid-19](#) Assessment Centers. This includes:

- Surgical/procedure mask
- Isolation gown
- Gloves
- Eye protection

Further resources on PPE can be found here: [NSH PPE resources for covid-19 testing](#)

Pharmacy teams can continue to order PPE from the provincial supply. It is currently approved until March 31, 2021. PANS has provided the NSH Supplies team with a list of participating pharmacies.

They will now supply an additional 2 masks, 5 gloves, 1.5 shields and 2 gowns per day upon request, for pharmacies to conduct COVID-19 testing.