



## MONDAY START FOR NEW COMMUNITY LABORATORY TESTING SERVICES

Changes to Auckland's community laboratory testing services will take effect from Monday, October 19.

Under the arrangement, 10% of the existing Labtests' contract will transfer to Diagnostic Medlab. This will cover laboratory testing services for private hospitals, private specialists, home visits requested by private specialists, fertility treatment and rest homes.

All other community laboratory testing will be provided by Labtests.

"The message for the public is very simple. If your GP or midwife sends you for a blood test go to Labtests. If your private specialist sends you for a blood test go to Diagnostic Medlab. Anyone with questions could contact 0800 557 572.

The Chairman of the Auckland Regional District Health Boards governance committee Pat Snedden said today the Boards had moved quickly to implement the changes announced on Tuesday which were aimed at ensuring Auckland had a safe, reliable, high quality community laboratory testing service.

"In advance of the changeover, Diagnostic Medlabs has this week ensured that private hospitals, private specialists, private fertility clinics and rest homes are aware of the services they will be providing and have the necessary forms for referrals. They have confirmed they are confident they are ready to go live on Monday."

Mr Snedden said a successful change would need the co-operation of the medical community and the people of Auckland as the Boards started to work with two providers.

"We are asking the medical community for their support as patients will be looking to them to direct them to the correct provider. This remains Labtests in the vast majority of cases. So the message to the people of Auckland is that if your GP refers you for tests, these will be done by Labtests at their collection centres. Home visits ordered by GPs will also be handled by Labtests."

Mr Snedden said the testing to be performed by Diagnostic Medlabs was all private sector work in the more complex range of the contracted services. All testing to be performed by Diagnostic Medlabs would require a referral from a private specialist.

"I am confident the medical community and the people of Auckland will adjust to a two provider system in relatively short order. As part of the process, both providers will be reporting to the medical community and the public on an agreed set of key performance safety and quality indicators and progress to achieve them. These will be issued monthly and will enable clinicians and the public to see for themselves the improved standards which the new contract will deliver," said Mr Snedden.

The change would take pressure off Labtests enabling them to deliver a safe and reliable high quality mainstream service to their contract specifications. Diagnostic Medlab would use its existing workforce to take on the private hospital and specialist work.

“Dividing up this work under the supervision of the ARDHBs is the most considered route to ensuring delivery of a measurable, high quality, safe service.”

He said private patients referred to Diagnostic Medlabs for tested needed to be aware that Diagnostic Medlabs' collection centre network was now limited to 12, following the closure of some collection rooms.

Diagnostic Medlabs collection rooms are located at: -

*Counties Manukau District Health Board region*

Botany, 260 Botany Rd, phone 534 1692

Manurewa, 161b Great South Road, phone 266 5633

*Auckland District Health Board region*

City, Quay West, corner Albert St and Mills Lane, phone 377 7397

Ellerslie, 10 Harrison Rd, phone 571 6410

Epsom, Mercy Hospital, 98 Mountain Rd, phone 630 0281

Greenlane, Ascot Hospital, 90 Greenlane Rd, phone 520 9538

Ponsonby, Ponsonby Tce, phone 378 7611

Remuera, 123 St Marks Road, 524 7431

St Heliers, 188 St Heliers Bay Rd, phone 585 0301

*Waitemata District Health Board region*

Henderson 49 Lincoln Rd, phone 837 5949

Mairangi Bay, cnr Appolo Dr and Rosedale Rd, phone 477 3790

Milford, Shorecare, 209 Shakespeare Rd, 486.4400.

**ENDS**

**For further information contact**

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