



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR PATIENTS

What is happening with community laboratory testing services in Auckland?

The Auckland Regional District Health Boards (ARDHBs) now have contracts with two providers, Labtests and Diagnostic Medlab (DML).

Under this arrangement, from 19 October 2009, 10% of the existing Labtests' contract is being transferred to DML. This will cover private sector work, which is in the more complex range of the contracted services and requires a large pathology workforce. It covers private hospitals, private specialists, home visits requested by private specialists, fertility treatment as well as Fertility Plus and services for immobile patients in rest homes.

All other community laboratory testing will continue to be provided by Labtests. This includes tests requested by GPs, midwives and specialists in public hospitals. Labtests' contract will continue to cover all community pathology for the three DHB regions.

How will I know where to go for tests?

If your GP, midwife or a specialist in a public hospital, except for Fertility Plus has referred you for tests, you need to go to a Labtests collection centre. (Go to www.labtests.co.nz for collection centre addresses.) This includes tests ordered by GPs for rest home residents who are **mobile** and able to attend collection centres.

If your tests are ordered by a private specialist, a private hospital or a fertility clinic, they will be carried out by DML. (Go to www.dml.co.nz for addresses.) **Immobile** patients in rest homes, will also have specimens collected by DML. This means:

- Patients who have tests ordered by private specialists will now be directed to one of 12 DML collection centres.
- If your private specialist has ordered a home collection, this will be done by DML staff.
- Services provided by DML for rest homes will be for non-mobile residents only.
- Services provided by DML for private hospitals will cover all surgical and medical in-patients, including day stay.

How do I know that the testing standards and proper testing procedures are being done?

There will be regular reports posted on www.dml.co.nz and www.labtests.co.nz

In terms of my lab tests, what is the difference between a public specialist and a private specialist?

A public specialist is someone you will see in a public hospital, hospital outpatient clinic or community mental health centre. For the purposes of laboratory testing, a public hospital specialist will ask you to go to Labtests for your tests.

Your family doctor (GP) will be referring you to Labtests.

A private specialist will work from a private hospital or their own private rooms and will refer you to DML for your testing.

I have regular tests taken at my home. Who will do those now?

If your tests are ordered by your family doctor (GP) or a specialist at a public hospital, these tests will continue to be done by Labtests.

If your tests are ordered by a private specialist, these tests will be done by DML.

Why can't I get referred to DML if I prefer it?

DML is not funded to provide this service. There is also no current facility for you to pay DML to do your tests. DML only covers tests requested by private specialists, private hospitals, private fertility clinics and tests for immobile patients in rest homes.

All other community testing remains with Labtests and your GP, midwife or a specialist in a public hospital, will continue to refer you to a Labtests collection centre.

Exceptions to the usual

Private birth and midwifery provider, **Birthcare**, will remain with Labtests for all of their testing requirements.

Private **fertility services** and **Fertility Plus** will have all laboratory services provided by Diagnostic Medlab.

Any questions about the services please contact 0800 557 572