

## COVID-19 Testing Process Webinar Question-Answer Session

May 27, 2020

During the testing process updates [webinar](#), Amanda Dreyer (DHS) and Melanie Hayward (Exact Sciences) facilitated a question-answer session. The following is an edited summary of the discussion.

### **What is the update from the State of Wisconsin regarding testing supplies?**

The state continues to secure testing supplies from diverse sources. We have been able to meet the increasing demand. The full cost of tests are covered if you use Exact Sciences or any other Wisconsin reference lab (see list of labs from the Wisconsin State Laboratory Hygiene [here](#) ). State support for testing will continue through December 31, 2020 and possibly into 2021. You can order testing supplies through the State of Wisconsin web portal: <https://covid19supplies.wi.gov/Testing>. Universal supplies tend to come in large supplies and have a shelf-life of 7 weeks. Coolers are available for specimen transport (smaller coolers fit 40-50 specimens, larger coolers can fit 200 specimens). Please allow 5 business days to receive supplies after placing an order.

### **What has been done to address leaky test tubes received from the state testing kits?**

This is an important issue because Exact Sciences cannot process leaky specimen samples. The state worked with the manufacturer to initiate quality improvement processes (e.g., tighten lids, switch to another tube type). The leaks issue should be resolved. If there are any problems with testing kit quality, please send an email with the issues to: [WICOVID19TestingCollectionSupplies@wisconsin.gov](mailto:WICOVID19TestingCollectionSupplies@wisconsin.gov)

### **Are there geographical limitations for using Gold Cross Courier Services?**

No. Gold Cross Courier Services have traveled to all corners of Wisconsin. If you are having a problem with Gold Cross, please contact dispatch directly (phone: 1-715-839-9989) to resolve the issue. If the issues continue, contact the State Emergency Operations Center testing team for assistance: [WICOVID19TestingCollectionSupplies@wisconsin.gov](mailto:WICOVID19TestingCollectionSupplies@wisconsin.gov)

### **What is an effective way to use Gold Cross Courier Services for high volume testing sites?**

For testing sites that generate a large volume daily, it is recommended to schedule the courier to arrive daily for specimen pick up. Gold Cross will route overnight to the Exact Sciences lab in Madison with next day delivery between 6:00 and 8:00 am. This daily routine can expedite testing turnaround.

### **How long can specimens stay frozen to be viable?**

If specimens will be sent to Exact Sciences (or any other lab) after 24 hours of collection, freeze specimens at  $\leq -70^{\circ}$  C. Once frozen, specimens are viable for the long-term. Specimens will be rejected if they are received outside of the 72-hour stability requirement. The best practice is to send specimens for lab testing as soon as possible and that means cooling specimens upon collection for delivery Exact Sciences within 24 hours of collection.

### **Can Exact Sciences provide an update on their turnaround time?**

During the week of May 18, 2020, Exact Sciences experienced a substantial increase in specimens which created testing delays. Most of the requests for testing were received via paper. To address the increase, Exact Sciences added staff to lab testing and created process efficiencies. It is recommended that test requests are submitted electronically to increase processing efficiency.

**What is the turnaround time to receive test results from Exact Sciences?**

The turnaround time is 72 hours. This time frame begins once the specimen is received at the Exact Sciences lab and ends once results are posted. If you are experiencing delays, please contact the Exact Sciences COVID Customer Support Team via phone at 844-570-9730 or email [COVIDCustomerAccountSet-up@exactsciences.com](mailto:COVIDCustomerAccountSet-up@exactsciences.com).

**What is the Exact Sciences lab capacity for testing?**

10,000 tests were processed in a recent 24-hour period.

**Can Exact Sciences accept other types of testing supplies beyond their kit?**

Yes. Supplies to use: one tube of viral Transport Media (UTM; Universal Transport Media), Amies, or RNase free Normal saline is acceptable, or one nasopharyngeal sterile swab (preferred); oropharyngeal is acceptable if a nasopharyngeal swab is not possible. The Exact Sciences lab cannot accept swabs with wooden handles, calcium-alginate swabs, or cotton-tipped swabs.

**What are the qualifications for staff who are testing and collecting specimens?**

To address this question, please refer to guidance from your medical association, your organization's leadership, and the CDC. In the Exact Sciences introductory video, there is a demonstration of the specimen collection procedure.

**What is the accuracy of Exact Sciences COVID-19 testing?**

This test has been authorized by the FDA under an Emergency Use Authorization. Testing methodology: real-time RT-PCR test intended for the qualitative detection of nucleic acid from SARS-CoV-2 in respiratory specimens. Two primary steps: 1) extraction of viral RNA from patient specimens; 2) one-step reverse transcription and PCR amplification with SARS-CoV-2 specific primers & real-time detection SARS-CoV-2 specific probes for the N gene of the SARS-CoV-2 viral RNA and the human RNase P (RP) gene. For more information, please contact the Exact Sciences medical science liaison.

**How can testing results from Exact Sciences be accessed?**

Exact Sciences presents testing results through Epic. Setting up an Epicare link allows real-time viewing of results (see ES has a tip sheet). If you are not an ordering physician, you can access results through Care Everywhere. Finally, the best option is accessing results through an Epic HL7 interface.

**Tell us more about the Epic HL7 interface.**

Exact Sciences has partnered with Epic for a HL7 interface. Seven Wisconsin health care groups now have this capacity. Epic offers the technical staff and the service to build this interface at no cost. Timeline for this build partly depends on your organization's readiness to engage. The actual work takes up to about one week. Having this interface greatly increases efficiency of reporting testing results.

**We do not have Epic. Can testing requests be sent to Exact Sciences via fax?**

Yes. Faxing the test request form is an option. However, high volume testing requests may be delayed because fax machines cannot easily receive hundreds of test results.

**Are both positive and negative results reported into WEDSS?**

Yes. Both types of results (positive, negative) are reported to WEDSS and other platforms. A recent addition in WEDSS allows testing results to be accessed by patient name and date of birth.