



September 2026

Information update:
Reducing the risk of respiratory illness transmission during sample collection

We are asking for your support in reducing the risk of respiratory illness transmission in our Pathlab collection rooms, home visit services, and aged care facilities.

We have recently seen several patients attend for routine blood tests while symptomatic with Influenza A, COVID-19, or other respiratory infections. In some cases, this was not noted on the laboratory request form, and our staff only became aware of the diagnosis during the visit.

To help protect vulnerable patients, aged care residents, and our phlebotomists, we ask that:

- Where a blood test is routine and not clinically urgent, consideration is given to deferring collection until the patient is no longer infectious.
- Where testing cannot be deferred, the patient's infectious status is noted in the clinical details on the request form, and the patient is encouraged to wear a mask at their appointment.

This is especially important for home visits and aged care facilities, where exposure carries a higher risk of transmission to other vulnerable residents and patients. Advance notice of a patient's infectious status allows our phlebotomists to arrange appropriate infection control measures and wear the correct PPE.

Thank you for your support and cooperation on this.

Carol Branson - Service Lead, Patient Services