

<b>DATE:</b>	2 February 2026
<b>TO:</b>	All Zones: Healthcare Providers Ordering or Performing Lumbar Puncture
<b>FROM:</b>	External Send Outs, Alberta Precision Labs (APL)
<b>RE:</b>	<b>New Process to Order CSF External Send Out Tests</b>

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## PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

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### Key Message

- Effective **February 10, 2026**, providers can use pre-built order sets in Connect Care to order a “*CSF External Sendout Test (Referred Test)*” whenever an esoteric CSF test is **not** available as its own individual Connect Care order.
- New workflows have been created for both In-Clinic Lumbar Puncture (LP) and Interventional Radiology LP procedures.

### Background

- Previously, external send out tests for CSF specimens required clinicians to place a “*Request for External Sendout Lab Test*” in Connect Care prior to the lumbar puncture procedure. This process required the lab to review and order CSF ESO tests, and gaps in downstream workflows were identified. Consequently, delays in collecting and sending out CSF specimens occurred with subsequent delays in reporting results.
- The new orderable “*CSF External Sendout Test*” will allow the order to be placed by the clinician in the appropriate phase of patient care and will support prioritization of CSF tests to better ensure there is sufficient volume of CSF for testing.

### How this will impact you

- The new orderable “*CSF External Sendout Test (Referred Test)*” has been added to Lumbar Puncture SmartSets (bedside and OR), Ambulatory Interventional Radiology LP SmartSet, and neurology preference lists.
- In addition to “Test(s) required,” the “Minimum volume (mL) required” field must be completed. **Lab staff will treat the “CSF External Sendout Test (Referred Test)” as the highest-priority test** in the collection. Because this is not a test the lab staff will recognize, they will not know how much CSF to reserve for it otherwise. Without the minimum-volume information, they may allocate the entire specimen to the send-out test, which could prevent other necessary CSF tests from being performed.
- If the “Minimum volume (mL) required” information is unknown, please contact the appropriate Lab Medical staff via ROCA to discuss. Otherwise, consider placing a “*CSF TUBE, HOLD*” [LAB71779] order instead. However, be aware that “**CSF TUBE, HOLD**” is treated as the **lowest-priority order by lab staff** which may not be appropriate.

Tests can subsequently be added after collection; See CSF Tube, Hold” results in Chart Review for ordering instructions.

- If the “Test required” is “*Neurodegenerative Profile, CSF,*” Lab Medical approval will be required. The specimen volume required is 2 mL.



- A specific CSF collection kit and Providence Health Care requisition must also be used, and are available from:
- University of Alberta Hospital Edmonton 780-407-7463
- Diagnostic and Scientific Centre Calgary 403-770-3285

#### **Action Required**

- Ensure the test you are ordering is not already available as a direct order in Connect Care.
- Be familiar with and follow steps in the CMIO CSF External Send out Test Request Tip Sheet.

#### **Questions/Concerns**

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#### **Approved by**

- Dr. Carolyn O'Hara, Chief Medical Laboratory Officer, APL