

DATE:	30 March 2026
TO:	All Health Care Providers that Order Cervical Cancer Screening Tests using the AHS Epic Electronic Health System
FROM:	Alberta Precision Laboratories Cytopathology Leadership
RE:	Ordering Solution for the Co-Existence of Gynecological Cytology and HPV Primary Testing

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Key Message

- Effective March 31, 2026, an update will be made to the Gynecological Cytology order in Connect Care using rules to automatically determine the patient's eligibility for Gynecological Cytology or HPV Primary Testing as their cervical cancer screening test.

Background

- HPV Primary Testing Project began November 5, 2025, with cervical cancer screening transitioned to primary high-risk HPV testing for individuals aged 50-69 with automatic reflex cytology additionally performed on specimens found to contain high-risk HPV (HPV Primary positive).
- During the transition, any orders placed using Connect Care defaulted to Gynecological Cytology testing, regardless of patient age or encounter.
- Primary HPV testing is not available as a standalone order in Connect Care.
- An ordering solution is being implemented in Connect Care to support the co-existence of Gynecological Cytology and HPV Primary testing.
- Connect Care will automatically determine the appropriate performable test based on:
 - Patient age
 - Patient encounter department (ex. Colposcopy clinic appointment)
- This approach ensures appropriate test selection, maintains alignment with HPV Primary Testing project parameters, and removes the requirement to print a paper requisition for patient 50-69 years old.

How this will impact you

- Continue to order Gynecological Cytology** in Connect Care, the changes will be completed in the background.
- For clinics offering multiple services (e.g. colposcopy, menopause or gynecology clinics), ensure the patient encounter department reflects the appropriate service. General Gynecological clinics at Red Deer and Wetaskiwin do not have specific colposcopy patient encounter departments at this time. This is being addressed with a future Connect Care change, date to be determined.
- The appropriate performable test will be placed based on the patient's age and patient encounter department, refer to table below:

Patient Age	Performable Test	
	Colposcopy Clinic Patient encounter dept.	All other Patient encounters dept (E.g., Menopause or Gyne clinics)
<50	Gynecological Cytology	Gynecological Cytology
≥50	Gynecological Cytology	HPV Primary screen



- Specimen collection methods and specimen vials remain the same for cervical and vagina specimens. All necessary testing completed on the same specimen vial including Reflex Cytology testing on HPV Primary positive specimens; no additional sample collection is required.
- Vulva has been removed as an available specimen source for Gynecological Cytology and HPV Test of Cure orders. The appropriate order is Non-Gynecological Cytology.
- For individuals aged 50-69 years old at the time of collection and not attending a Colposcopy clinic, Primary HPV testing will be performed automatically even though Gynecological Cytology is ordered. Results will be reported as:
 - HPV Negative: Chemistry report, no Cytology performed
 - HPV Positive, Indeterminate: Chemistry report with comment that reflex Cytology will be performed
 - Reflex Cytology report includes the HPV result and follow-up recommendation

Action Required

- Order Non-Gynecological Cytology for vulvar cytology specimens.
- Review and follow information about Primary HPV screening and clinical pathways at [Cervical Screening Information - Screening For Life | Screening For Life](#) or scan the QR code to access pathway:



Effective **March 31, 2026**

Questions/Concerns

- Dr. Anna Piskorski, Medical Lead, Hub Lab North Cytology at Anna.Piskorski@albertaprecisionlabs.ca
- Dr. Marcia Abbott, Medical Lead, Hub Lab South Cytology at Marcia.Abbott@albertaprecisionlabs.ca
- Dr. Byron Berenger, Provincial Microbiology Section Chief at Byron.Berenger@albertaprecisionlabs.ca

Approved by

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