NOTICE OF CHANGE OF SERVICE

DATE: September 5, 2008
TO: Housestaff and PCN Physicians, Faculty, and Nursing Personnel
FROM: Jeff Gregg, MD
       Director, Molecular Pathology
RE: HIV Viral Load Testing Change

Effective September 16, 2008 HIV viral load quantitative testing will be performed by real-time PCR using the Roche COBAS AmpliPrep/COBAS TaqMan HIV-1 test. This replaces our current viral load testing performed by branched chain DNA (bDNA). The COBAS TaqMan test is an FDA-approved assay with improved sensitivity and dynamic range. The reportable range for this assay is from 48 to 10,000,000 copies/mL. There is no need to re-baseline patients due to high correlation between the new COBAS TaqMan test and our previous bDNA methodology.

Sample Requirement: One full whole blood 4mL EDTA (purple top) tube
Note: PPT tubes are NOT acceptable

Lab Sample Processing: Centrifuge, aliquot plasma and freeze within 6 hours of collection
1.1 mL frozen plasma minimum.

Reference Internal: <48 copies/mL (Below the limit of detection of the assay)
48 – 10,000,000 copies/mL
>10,000,000 copies/mL (Above the upper range of the assay)

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Sandy Hatcher at (916) 734-1673 or the molecular staff at (916) 734-1670.

APPROVED BY: Lydia P. Howell, MD
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