

November 30, 2024

BULLETIN

Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses Ordering Lab Tests

Relevant legislation and regulation

Effective June 19, 2023, Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RN/RPN) are designated as “referring practitioners” in the [Laboratory Services Regulation \(LSR\)](#), under the [Laboratory Services Act \(LSA\)](#). The designation allows them to order certain laboratory tests, as benefits, when communicable disease management and treatment are defined in their scope of practice.

Tests RN/RPNs can order

RN/RPNs may order outpatient fee-for-service (FFS) tests listed in Schedule D - Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses Laboratory Services Referral Schedule, which can be found on the [practitioner schedules](#) on the Provincial Laboratory Medicine Services (PLMS) web page.

Non-fee-for-service (non-FFS) tests that are funded through a health authority’s global operating budget and considered as benefits under the LSA can be ordered by RN/RPNs, provided the testing falls within their scope of practice. A non-exhaustive list of these tests was developed to provide guidance to RNs and RPNs and is also available on the PLMS practitioner schedules page under the accordion heading “Related nursing scope of practice tests”.

Discussions to add additional tests are underway with the Ministry of Health, BCCDC, BCCNM, and other partners. Once the next list of fee-for-service tests are finalized, the Ministry of Health can pursue updating the schedule through a Ministerial Order.

Guidance on ordering these tests is outlined in the [BCCDC Communicable Disease Control Manual](#).

Steps required for RN/RPNs to refer for laboratory tests

The [Laboratory Services Regulation](#) allows RNs and RPNs to apply for and use a Medical Services Plan (MSP) practitioner number to order screening and diagnostic laboratory tests for the purpose of communicable disease prevention and management. Per BCCNM standards, applying for and using an MSP practitioner number requires organizational/employer approval and established organizational/employer policies and processes. MSP practitioner numbers will generally only be needed when nurses are ordering tests that are to be completed or processed in outpatient settings.

RN/RPNs must register with laboratory operators, providing test result distribution and contact information, MSP practitioner number, and other details. RN/RPNs should register with the laboratory operators in the geographic region in which they practice. [A list of laboratory operators](#) with links to the required forms is available on the PLMS website.

RN/RPNs can enroll and securely log on to CareConnect to view their patient’s laboratory testing history, using their web browser.



Requisition forms

To order laboratory tests for patients outside of acute, inpatient settings, RNS and RPNs ordering tests to support communicable disease management and treatment should use the Standard Outpatient Laboratory Requisition available on the PLMS [Requisitions](#) web page. The BCCDC Public Health Laboratory specific [serology Screening or Virology Requisitions](#) may also be used.

Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses must have their MSP practitioner number *and* be registered with laboratory operators before laboratory tests are ordered.

Inquiries regarding the practitioner schedule should be sent to pracbenefitscheds@phsa.ca

Further updates on RN/RPNs ordering lab tests can be found on the Ministry's website:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/msp/registered-nurses-certified>

RNs and RPNs should refer to the British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives website for further information on [Scope of Practice: Standards, Limits, Conditions](#)

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