



BC Centre for Disease Control  
Provincial Health Services Authority

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**Date: November 26, 2024**

**Administrative Circular: 2024:19**

**ATTN:** Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices  
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators  
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

**Re: New Communicable Disease Control Manual, Appendix A**

**Appendix A: RNs/RPNs & Autonomous Ordering of Screening and Diagnostic Tests for the Purpose of Communicable Disease Prevention and Management**

The [Laboratory Services Regulation](#) was revised in 2023 to recognize Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs) as referring practitioners for a broad range of laboratory screening and diagnostic tests for the purpose of communicable disease (CD) prevention and management. This change in regulation, as well as recent updates to the application and issuance processes for a Medical Services Plan practitioner number (MSP #), now enables non-certified practice RNs and RPNs to apply for and use an MSP # for autonomous ordering of certain screening and diagnostic tests. An MSP # is required when ordering tests that are to be completed or processed in outpatient laboratories.

Per the new BC College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM) Screening and Diagnostic Tests & Imaging Practice Standard for [Registered Nurses](#) and [Registered Psychiatric Nurses](#), RNs and RPNs can only apply for and use their MSP # to order tests for the purpose of CD prevention and management when:

- They have the approval of their organization/employer, and
- Their organization/employer has policies and processes to review and follow up on test results, and processes for the nurse to refer or transfer care to another health professional, as applicable.

A new [Appendix](#) to the BC Communicable Disease Control Manual has been developed to support nurses and autonomous ordering of screening and diagnostic tests for the purpose of CD prevention and management. The new Appendix outlines:

- the regulatory requirements and standards of practice for nurses when autonomously ordering, interpreting, and managing screening and diagnostic tests;

- links to the applicable guidelines within each chapter of the BC Communicable Disease Control Manual for a respective test to support decision making;
- links to more information on the application and usage processes for an MSP #; and
- the tests RNs/RPNs can order with their MSP practitioner number that pertain to established guidelines within the BC CDC Manual.

**Please add new section:** dated November 26, 2024

The supporting BCCDC [Q&A: RNs/RPNs & Autonomous Ordering of Screening and Diagnostic Tests for the Purpose of Communicable Disease Prevention and Management](#) has been developed to address anticipated questions from nurses and/or employers. For further questions related to organization/employer policies and processes, please connect with your local professional practice team.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Stephanie Meier, Director of Professional Practice and Learning & Development, BCCDC (telephone: 604-707-2577 / email: [stephanie.meier@bccdc.ca](mailto:stephanie.meier@bccdc.ca)).

Sincerely,



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BC Centre for Disease Control

pc:

Provincial Health Officer  
Dr. Bonnie Henry

BC Ministry of Health,  
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