

November 2, 2011

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# HQCA asked to review pathology testing processes by Calgary Laboratory Services at RGH

CALGARY – Alberta Health Services has asked the Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA) to review the handling of pathology tests by Calgary Laboratory Services (CLS) at Rockyview General Hospital (RGH).

A total of thirty-one specific cases in late December 2010 and early 2011 are included in the review, which will begin immediately. At this point, there is no evidence that any patient received incorrect therapy or that their treatment was unduly delayed.

“All 31 cases were previously identified and AHS took corrective action when they were discovered. We have contacted the offices of all of the physicians and the majority of patients. The HQCA review will help reassure patients that our testing is accurate and that our processes are comprehensive and thorough,” said AHS President and CEO, Dr. Chris Eagle.

“I have been briefed by Alberta Health Services and support their decision to ask the HQCA to carry out the review,” said Fred Horne, Minister of Health and Wellness. “Such reviews are a regular part of ensuring processes in the health care system are meeting standards and will ultimately help improve patient care.”

The review will cover tests from 2010 until now, including possible processing malfunctions and irregularities. It includes but is not limited to the 31 specific cases.

AHS has also asked the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, as the accrediting body for Alberta’s laboratories, to conduct an interim inspection to re-confirm that Calgary Laboratory Services is operating in accordance with approved standards.

Pathology testing includes biopsies and other tissue specimens used to diagnose diseases. CLS policies, processes, equipment, technical procedures and work environment are part of the review.

“In Calgary, Alberta Health Services does more than 21 million lab tests annually. In all cases, quality and patient safety are the primary considerations. Any concern, in even a small number of cases, for whatever reason, warrants a thorough review,” said Dr. Eagle.

AHS has set up an information line to answer questions or concerns from any patients who had pathology tests done at Rockyview General Hospital since late 2010. The number is: 1-866-301-2668.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than 3.7 million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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For media inquiries, contact:

Don Stewart,  
AHS Communications  
403-943-1210