



Kent Hospital | Women & Infants Hospital | Butler Hospital
VNA of Care New England | Integra | The Providence Center

To: All Healthcare Providers, Nursing, and Outpatient Offices

From: C. James Sung, M.D.
Executive Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, Care New England Health System Chief of Pathology
and Laboratory Medicine, Women & Infants Hospital

Cunxian Zhang, M.D.,Ph.D.
Chief and CLIA Director of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, Kent Hospital

Katrine Hansen, M.D
Director of Microbiology Lab, Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island

Amy Arruda, MT (ASCP)^{CM}
Microbiology Laboratory Manager, Care New England Health System

Date: July 25,2023

RE: Implementation of H. pylori Stool Antigen Testing at Women and Infants Hospital

As of July 25, 2023 **H. pylori Stool Antigen Testing will be performed at Women and Infants Hospital** in the Microbiology Laboratory. This test was previously sent out. Meanwhile, we will **discontinue offering H. pylori antibody testing**. Our laboratory test offerings were adjusted based on the following guidelines and recommendations.

Both the American College of Gastroenterology and the American Gastroenterological Association recommend “non-serological” tests be used to help diagnose active H. pylori infection. Non-invasive tests include the **Urea Breath Test** and the **H. pylori Stool Antigen Test (HpSA)**. The Urea Breath Test is already offered within Care New England at Kent Hospital’s Laboratory. HpSA is now performed at Women and Infant’s Laboratory. Both these assays are more sensitive and specific than antibody testing. Positive results from these assays indicate active infection. The assays are recommended to be repeated after treatment as a negative result after treatment is indicative of H. pylori eradication and shows that the patient’s treatment regimen was successful.

H. pylori antibody testing has lower sensitivity and specificity as compared to non-serological testing. It does not differentiate between active vs. past infection and is not useful in determining effectiveness of treatment. Increasing number of health insurance providers no longer reimburse for H. pylori antibody testing.

As a result of all these considerations, **Care New England is now only offering H. pylori Stool Antigen Testing and the Urea Breath Test, and will discontinue offering H. pylori antibody testing.** In doing so, we join other national reference laboratories such as the Mayo Clinic, ARUP, and Quest Diagnostics Laboratories, who have already discontinued their H. pylori antibody testing. Thank you for working with us as we align ourselves with best practices.