



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY BRANCH

June 15, 2011

To: Providers of Tuberculosis Health Care Services

Starting June 15, 2011, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CTDPH) Laboratory will be offering nucleic acid amplification (NAA) testing on tuberculosis (TB) **clinical specimens** using the GEN-PROBE® AMPLIFIED™ *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Direct (MTD) Test. Conventional culture methods may take up to eight weeks to detect tuberculosis growth, whereas NAA testing allows for the identification of *M. tuberculosis* complex in clinical specimens within 24-48 hours after receipt of the specimen in the laboratory. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that NAA testing be performed on respiratory specimens from patients with pulmonary signs and symptoms of TB, but before a diagnosis has been established, and when the results would impact public health control activities.

Please refer to the attached *Guidelines for Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing for M. tuberculosis at the Connecticut Department of Public Health Laboratory* that accompany this letter for further information on the intended use and laboratory requirements for specimen submission. Specifically, an NAA test will be routinely performed on the first acid-fast bacilli (AFB) smear positive respiratory specimen received for each patient. **NAA testing on negative AFB smear respiratory specimens will be only be performed on request.** The enclosed *Request for AMPLIFIED Mycobacterium Tuberculosis Direct (MTD) Test* form, along with the routine clinical laboratory submission form, must accompany each specimen for which NAA testing is requested. While the guidelines include recommendations on the interpretation of NAA test results, all questions concerning interpretation of NAA results should be directed to the CTDPH TB Control Program at 860-509-7722.

The addition of NAA TB testing at the DPH Laboratory will enhance the comprehensive TB testing services we already offer. It can result in rapid and reliable detection of *M. tuberculosis* leading to more appropriate use of isolation facilities and initiation of therapy. Please note that NAA testing will be performed free of charge for all clients. Contact the CTDPH Mycobacteriology Laboratory (860-509-8573) with any questions or concerns as needed.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of John Fontana in black ink.

John Fontana, PhD, (HCLD) ABB
Director of Public Health Laboratory

Handwritten signature of Gary Budnick in black ink.

Gary Budnick, MHS
Supervising Microbiologist

cc: L. Sosa, H. Jenkins