



July 9th 2020

Dear colleagues,

The HPSC has been informed by the NVRL that due to the ongoing pandemic of SARS-CoV-2, from henceforth (until further notice) only molecular investigations for measles, rubella or mumps RNA (PCR) will be performed on the OraCol collection devices. **No** IgM testing for measles, rubella or mumps will be performed.

Summary of key changes to note

- OraCol samples for diagnosis of acute infection with measles, mumps or rubella, will continue – **but only for molecular testing for viral RNA (PCR testing) and as part of the diagnosis during the acute phase of illness**
- OraCol samples will **no longer be tested for the IgM antibody response to infection** (for reasons see below)
- The reason for change in practice is because of the risks of potential transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from OraCol samples during the elution process of the sample and the initial steps of the serological testing
- Serological testing for acute phase antibody response (IgM) if required (and if too late for molecular testing of OraCol sample to be obtained) should be sought by obtaining a blood sample.

Recommendations

- The preferred method of diagnosis of acute measles, rubella or mumps is by molecular testing for viral RNA using the OraCol swab.
- OraCol samples should be obtained as soon as possible after illness onset. Samples obtained after this period are more likely to be reported as negative for viral RNA detection.
- Recommended time for obtaining oral fluid swabs by disease:
 - Measles - within 6 days of rash onset
 - Rubella - within 5 days of rash onset
 - Mumps - within 5 days of symptom onset

ACTIONS

- HSPC will be up- dating the testing algorithms on the HPSC website
- NVRL will be posting a note on this change on their NVRL website
- Please cascade this information to those staff and clinicians in your areas as appropriate