



No: DD/ SSU/ COVID19/Lab Services/21/2020-21

Date: 19-05-2021

**CIRCULAR**

**Sub:** Guidelines to conduct RAT testing in the state

**Ref:** ICMR Advisory for COVID-19 testing during the second wave of the pandemic dtd 04-05-2021

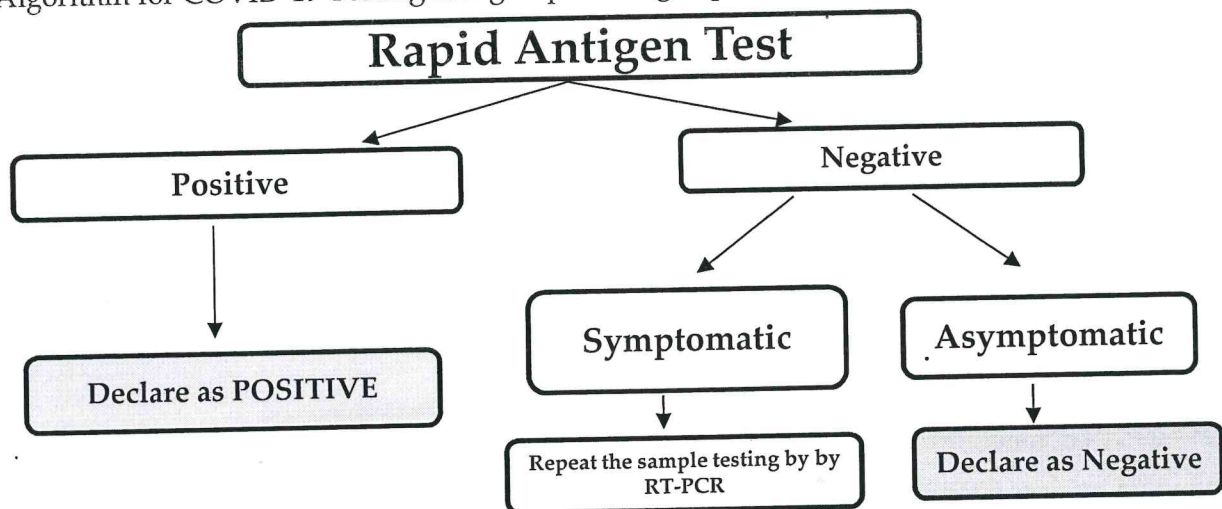
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With increasing number of COVID-19 cases, the laboratories are facing challenges to meet the expected testing target due to extraordinary case load and staff getting infected with COVID-19. In view of this situation, it is imperative to optimize the RTPCR testing and simultaneously increase the access to other available testing platforms like Rapid Antigen testing, CBNAAT, TrueNAT and any other ICMR approved platforms.

To meet the testing demand, it is advised to use more Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT). Following are few recommended measures to optimize RAT testing and the guidelines to implement at the field level:

1. Rapid Antigen Test may be allowed at all available Government and private healthcare facilities.
2. Interested private facilities can approach District health & Family Welfare Officer/District Surveillance Officer for obtaining the approval for RAT testing.
3. Concerned District Surveillance Officers can approve the private facility for RAT testing based on following criteria (Checklist attached).
  - a. The private facility should tie up with the nearest RT-PCR COVID-19 testing lab for referring the repeat samples from Symptomatic Negative cases and should agree to ensure the uploading of RTPCR results in the ICMR portal by the concerned linked RTPCR lab within 24hrs of sample collection.
  - b. The private facility should agree for doing the test at the rate fixed as and when by the Govt of Karnataka.
  - c. The private facility should produce the MOU with Biomedical waste pick up agency.
4. The login credential is provided as an approval for performing Rapid Antigen Test and generating the reports for the same. The private lab can collect sample under the LAB NAME given to that particular private lab in the approval letter.
5. All samples should mandatorily be collected through RT-PCR App for which the institution should get registered under RT-PCR app.
6. Concerned District Surveillance Officers will then register/whitelist the laboratory technologists or DEO to use the RTPCR app based on the request from authorized nodal officer of the private institution who will have to accept the responsibility of monitoring these registered swab collectors. DSO can deactivate the registration at any point of time in case any undesirable activities observed.
7. Only ICMR approved Rapid Ag kits should be used for testing. Visit <https://www.icmr.gov.in/ckitevaluation.html> for details of approved antigen kits.
8. As all rapid antigen test results are automatically updated to ICMR portal from RT-PCR app, the swab collector should select the correct 'Lab name' (as given during approval) from the drop down list in the app.

9. The Sample ID can be given in such a way that the name of the hospital is reflected in it.
10. All RAT positives are considered as the final positives and no repeat RTPCR test is required.
11. For all symptomatic RAT negative patients, another NP/OP swab should be collected in VT with generation of new SRF ID and to be sent to the linked RT-PCR laboratory for COVID-19 RTPCR testing immediately.
12. Algorithm for COVID-19 Testing using Rapid Antigen point-of-care test.



13. Ensure to generate new SRF ID for each swab collected using "REPEAT TEST" option in RT-PCR Mobile App.
14. The vaccination status, being the information of critical importance, must be entered into the Sample Referral Form (SRF) in the RTPCR app both for individuals tested by RTPCR and RAT.
15. Whom to be tested by RAT
  - a. All symptomatic Influenza like Illness (ILI) and (SARI) cases.
  - b. Asymptomatic high risk patients who are hospitalized for the treatment of any ailments other than COVID.
  - c. Asymptomatic patients undergoing aerosol generating surgical/non-surgical interventions.
  - d. Dead bodies: Sampling of Dead body can be considered in case of suspected COVID-19 Deaths.
16. This test is NOT recommended for the repeat or follows-up patients.
17. Biomedical waste management: Kits and testing strips should be discarded as per waste management protocol at the health facility.
18. Strict measures must be ensured to avoid overcrowding at RAT testing facilities.

**Note:** Video tutorials, manuals and FAQs for all the modules are provided in your account (login) in the Training menu option

Thanks and Regards,

  
**Mission Director-NHM**  
 (Nodal Officer – State COVID lab Services)

**CHECKLIST FOR ASSESSING A PRIVATE HOSPITAL/CLINIC/ LABORATORY FOR  
RECOMMENDING TO ICMR AS COVID-19 RAPID ANTIGEN TESTING CENTRE**

S. No.	Description	Response	
1	Type of Facility (Private Hospital/Clinic/Laboratory)		
2	Name of the Hospital/Clinic/Laboratory		
3	Name of the Nodal Person of the Hospital/Clinic/Laboratory :  Contact Number :  Email :		
4	(a) Is the facility tied up with the nearest RT-PCR COVID-19 testing lab for referring the repeat samples from Symptomatic Negative cases?	Yes	No
	(b) If Yes, is the MOU with linked RT-PCR lab is attached?	Yes	No
5	(a) The facility should agree for doing the test at the rate fixed by the Govt of Karnataka. Is the consent letter for the same is attached?	Yes	No
6	(c) Is the facility tied up with the Biomedical waste pick up agency?	Yes	No
	(d) If Yes, is the copy of MOU with BMW pick up agency is attached?	Yes	No

**Note:** If answer to questions 4(b), 5(a) and 6(b) are 'NO', the facility cannot be given permission for SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Testing and therefore cannot be recommended by Government of Karnataka to ICMR for obtaining Login credentials.

**Head of the Institute  
(Seal & Signature)**



Copy for necessary action,

1. Deputy Commissioners of All Districts
2. Chief Executive Officers, Zilla Panchayat, All Districts
3. District Health and Family Welfare Officer, All Districts.
4. District Surveillance Officers, All Districts.
5. The President, Karnataka Medical Association

Copy for the information to,

1. The Commissioner- Health & Family Welfare Services, Bengaluru
2. The Commissioner, BBMP, Bangalore
3. The Special Commissioner - Health, BBMP, Bengaluru
4. The Director, Health & FW Services, Arogya Soudha, Bangalore
5. The Director, Medical Education, AnandaRao Circle, Bangalore