

Real time release of complex labs to patients: What this means to your practice

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Land Acknowledgment

We would like to recognize that we are webcasting from, and to, many different parts of Alberta today. The province of Alberta is located on Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8 territory and is a traditional meeting ground and home for many Indigenous Peoples.

Disclosure of Financial Support

This program has not received any financial or in-kind support.

Presenter Disclosures

- Heidi Fell: AMA-physician contractor, PCN Contractor
- Steven Turner: AHS
- Dave Sidhu: None
- Brad Bahler: AMA-physician contractor
- Julie Lauzon: None
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Session Overview

- This session will prepare physicians for the planned release of microbiology, pathology, and genetics results to the My Health Record portal; this change is scheduled for August and September 2021.
- This interactive session will include presenters from family medicine, medical genetics, and pathology.
- Presenters will share their experiences and insights on what this change means for your practice, and how to adapt.

Learning Objectives

- Assess the impact of real time lab release to patients and the need for pre-test counselling
- Evaluate the impacts of patient access to labs on physician, clinic and/or hospital workflows

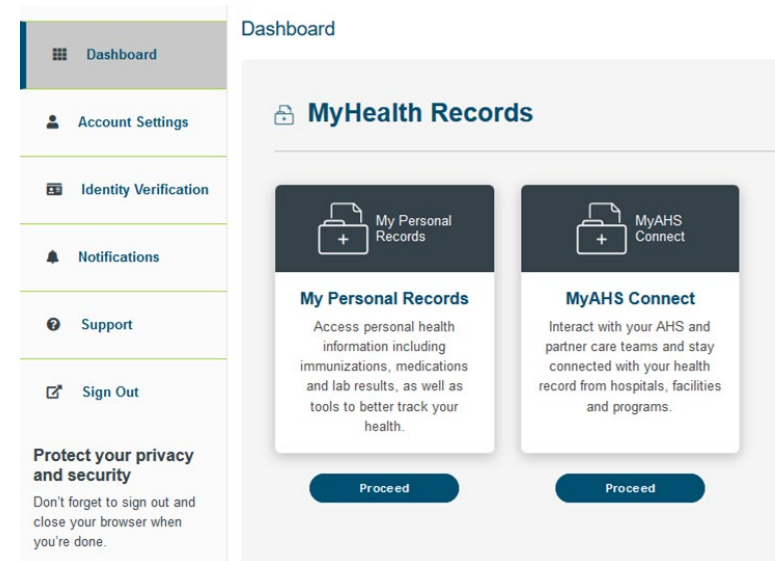
Patient Portals in Alberta

- Provincial
 - My Health Records
 - My Personal Records (Alberta Health) – “MPR”
 - MyAHS Connect (AHS Connect Care) – “MAC”
 - Covid-19 Children’s Lookup Tool
- Local
 - Physician Electronic Medical Records
 - Local Patient Health Records

MyHealth Records

Universal landing page for both MyPersonal Records and MyAHS Connect

- Any Albertan over 14 years of age
- Must have an Alberta Identity card or Driver's License
- Registration via MADI process
- Interim access confirmed by PIN sent via mail



Patient Portals

What's known already?

- All Albertans 14 and up
- 95% of labs (by volume) present as of Feb 1, 2021
- COVID and other immunization records
- Available to Albertans (14 and up) receiving care from an AHS facility using Connect Care

What's New or Coming?

- Microbiology released (no susceptibilities) June 15, 2021
- All lab results as of August 23, 2021 including pathology and genetics
 - In province only
 - Exception for neuro predictive genetic testing (done through genetics services)

Portal Summary

My Personal Record

- No patient notifications
- Almost all lab results released in real-time (as of August 23)
- No DI results at present (future development)
- New users only will see 18 months of retroactive data
- Brightsquid integration for secure messaging
- Sharing of records by patient control; no proxies

My AHS Connect

- Patients receive notifications when there is a new result
- All lab results released in real time to align with MPR
- DI results remain available with a five-day delay
- Retroactive view to 2017
- Additional communication tools available to support clinician – patient interactions.
- Proxy access available within identified guidelines

Important Concepts – Real Time Posting

- Patient will be able to see results as soon as they are available, sometimes prior to the provider
- Some Providers receive results as batch feeds (paper, fax or electronic) rather than in real time
 - Lab data also available to all providers in real time in Netcare
- Strong patient feedback that real time release is desirable, even when the news is bad
- Literature shows reduced anxiety overall among patients with real time release
- These changes were approved by the Health Information Executive Committee
 - Reps: AH, AHS, AMA, CPSA, ACP, ACFP, AARN, PCN

Important Concepts – Results Context

- Patients may contact a Provider who did not order the test (and not cc'ed that result)- to discuss that result
 - That provider needs to carefully decide how to handle that situation
 - Critical results
 - Results requiring detailed specialist follow-up
 - Need to be clear about the question prompting the test
- Also some appropriate and some inappropriate situations occur where a provider orders test(s) with another provider listed as the primary person ordering that test

Personal Experience/ Primary Care Perspective

- In general, the number of inquiries from patients is far less than I expected
- A very small number of patients need to be coached on appropriate communication
 - Opportunity to inform patient (benefits/risks, limitations, and potential outcomes)
- If using asynchronous messaging patients need to be clearly notified by the system that this is not for urgent issues
 - i.e. patient should call rather than message the provider for urgent issues

Personal Experience

- Pre-test counselling assists in managing patients expectations
 - Explanation of possible results (positive/negative, secondary or unexpected results)
 - Possibility of further testing (if inconclusive)
 - Managing expectations for next steps following result
 - Potential implications for family members (genetics testing)
 - Patient also have link access to test information on myhealth.alberta.ca
- Educate your patients on how you or your clinic review and act on results
- Patients greatly appreciate seeing results and having the ability to discuss them with you without having to make an in-person appointment

What about experiences in other portals?

- Community EMR (Telus Wolf) actively posting all lab and reports ~ 5 years
 - Net balance of calls (some patients call less now and some call more)
 - Panel is savvier with meaning of results and better self management, involvement in decisions
 - Use asynchronous messaging to replace “results review” appt.
 - Pre-counselling and planning with patients is key
 - Team “scripting” and process for patients calling for results

Genetics perspective

- Genetic and Genomics testing
 - Testing performed by
 - Cytogenetics Laboratory
 - Karyotype, Chromosomal Microarray
 - Molecular Genetics Laboratory
 - Single gene testing
 - Next Generation Sequencing (“gene panels”)
 - Biochemical Genetics Laboratory
 - Includes Newborn Metabolics Screening (MAC Only)
- Current access to genetic testing will not change
 - Open vs restricted access to specific care providers

Genetics perspective

Pre-test counselling

- Possible outcomes of testing
 - Positive
 - Negative
 - Variant unknown clinical significance (VUS)
 - Incidental findings
 - Carrier status
- Turn around time
- Clinical implications for patient
- Implications for family members
- Social and psychological impact

Genetics perspective

- A negative genetic test result does not mean it is not a genetic disorder
- A VUS is a VUS – cannot make diagnosis based on this result.

Genetics perspective

- Only in-province genetic testing performed by the Genetics and Genomics Laboratories will be released
 - *Exceptions
 - Out of Province testing
 - Predictive testing for some disorders

Genetics perspective

- Predictive testing/Pre-symptomatic testing
 - Testing of asymptomatic patients
 - Results that will be released include
 - Cardiac conditions
 - Cardiomyopathy, Cardiac arrhythmias, etc ...
 - Cancer predisposition
 - Neurologic conditions

*Results for neurodegenerative conditions will NOT be released (Huntington disease, ALS, Dementias, Ataxias)

Genetics perspective

Clinical Genetics and Metabolics Programs

Calgary

General Genetics Clinic (ACH)

- Phone (403) 955-7373
- Fax (403) 955-2701

Prenatal Genetics Clinic

(Cambrian Wellness Center)

- (403) 943-8375
- Fax (403) 943-8376

AB Netcare eReferrals

On call Consult Service

Edmonton

General and Metabolic Genetics Clinics (Stollery)

- Phone (780) 407-7333
- Toll free 1-855-935-7333
- Fax (780) 407-6845

Connect Care Referrals

On call Consult Service

Genetics and Genomics Laboratory Services

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/lab/page8667.aspx>

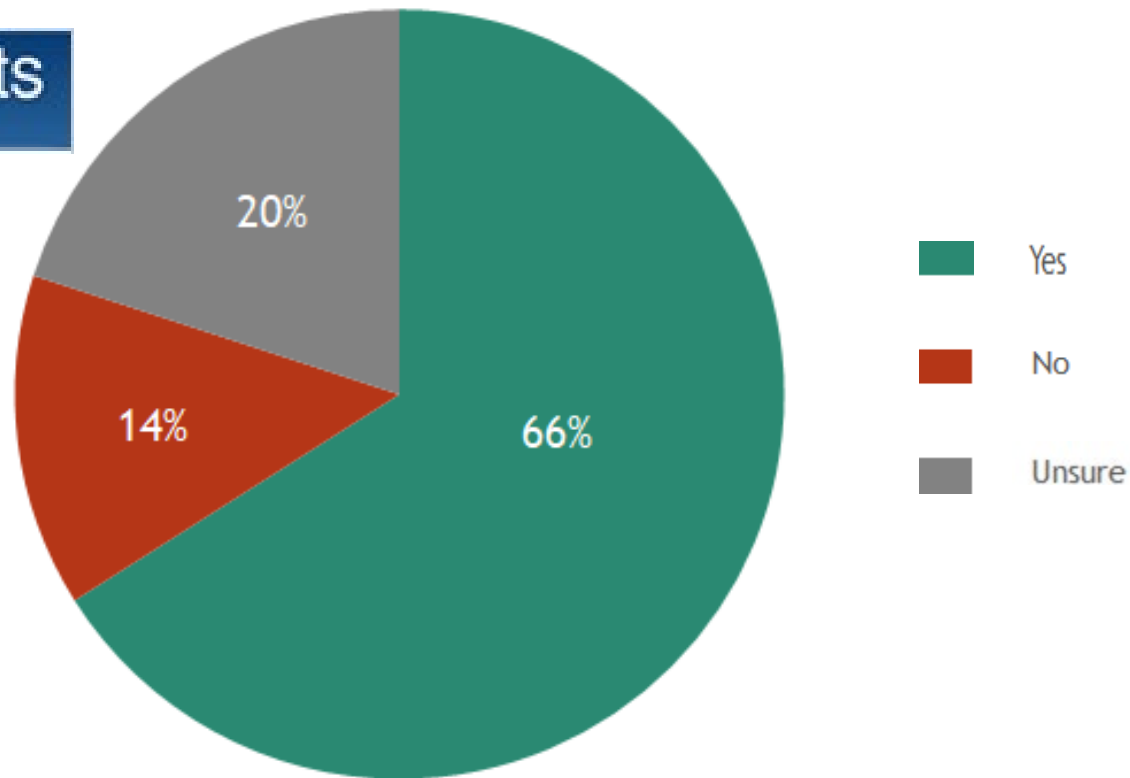
Lab Medicine / Pathology Perspective

- Pathology results peculiarities
- Pathology consults
 - “Patient” on-call service – In discussion
- Ordering pathology test - advise patient it may take weeks to get results
- Adjuvant testing
- Other change management?

Patient Perspective on Interaction with Pathologists

Do you think it would be valuable to have more interactions between pathologists/laboratory medicine physicians and patients to be able to understand how your lab tests were performed or assessed?

albertapathients
Your Voice Matters



Questions and Answers



Evaluation Link & CME Credits

Evaluation Link:

<https://interceptum.com/s/en/Realtimerelaseofcomplexlabsinpatinetportals>



CME Credits:

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