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To: Wisconsin Health Care Providers, Local Health Departments, Tribal Clinics,
Clinical Laboratories

From: Jeffrey P. Davis, MD, Chief Medical Officer and State Epidemiologist for
Communicable Diseases

Pete Shult, PhD, Director, Communicable Disease Division and Emergency Laboratory
Response, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene

Re: New testing recommendations for individuals with parotitis

It has been recently noted within Wisconsin and neighboring states that some individuals with signs and symptoms of parotitis have negative diagnostic tests for mumps, but positive tests for influenza or parainfluenza viruses. Because of the serious nature of influenza and this unusual manifestation, the Wisconsin Division of Public Health (DPH) and the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) are requesting that an additional specimen be submitted for influenza and other respiratory pathogen testing from individuals with parotitis to better understand this manifestation of influenza and determine its prevalence.

Therefore, for patients with parotitis without a known cause, two separate specimens should be collected for testing at the WSLH that will be conducted fee-exempt:

For mumps testing, a buccal swab should be collected for polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing.* The swab should be collected as soon as possible (preferably within 3 days of parotitis onset and not more than 9 days of parotitis onset) for the best opportunity to detect mumps virus.

For influenza and other respiratory pathogen testing (which is part of the respiratory virus PCR panel) either a nasopharyngeal (preferred) or an oropharyngeal swab should be collected.

Additional information from the WSLH regarding testing and specimen collection for mumps can be found at: <http://www.slh.wisc.edu/mumps-testing-guidance/>

*Note: Although serology was once recommended as an acceptable test for mumps diagnosis, the reported rates of false positive and false negative results, particularly among MMR-vaccinated individuals, have made interpretation difficult. As a result, the WSLH does not perform IgM or IgG testing for mumps and continues to recommend PCR as the preferred diagnostic test for mumps.