




MEMO

TO: North Dakota Laboratory Directors
North Dakota Clinic and Infection Control Managers
North Dakota Healthcare Providers

FROM: Michelle Feist 
Influenza Surveillance Coordinator

RE: Influenza Surveillance and Culture Identification

DATE: October 17, 2006

The North Dakota Dept. of Health (NDDoH) is requesting your assistance in identifying the influenza strains circulating in your communities. If you have a patient who tests positive via a rapid test, DFA or IFA, the NDDoH is asking that two additional specimens be collected and submitted to the North Dakota Public Health Laboratory for viral isolation in order to help identify type and strain. In addition, the strains identified early in the season will be submitted to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to determine if they are also the vaccine strains.

In an effort to track the number of samples coming into the laboratory, please call Michelle Feist for a **Disease Control ID number prior to shipping your influenza samples.** All influenza samples with a valid Disease Control ID number will be tested at no charge to a select number of patients until influenza is confirmed in your community. Two specimens should be submitted within the first 72 hours of illness; one specimen for a slide smear for DFA testing and another specimen for viral culture. If specimen collection supplies are not available, the NDDoH will provide specimen collection supplies and a shipping container.

Please call Michelle Feist at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.3177 if you have any questions regarding this memo or if you need specimen collection supplies. Your help is much appreciated.