



NEWS RELEASE from Halton Healthcare

For Immediate Release

Thursday, February 4, 2021

On Site COVID-19 Rapid Testing Device a “Game Changer” at Georgetown Hospital

(Georgetown, ON) Halton Healthcare recently introduced eight new *Abbott ID Now* rapid COVID-19 testing devices throughout its three hospitals. These new devices are used when results are required immediately such as for patients in the Emergency Department and those needing emergency surgery. According to Dr. Neil Rau, Medical Microbiologist, Halton Healthcare, “While PCR testing is the gold standard for accurately detecting the presence of the COVID-19 virus, the rapid test results are much quicker and are comparable in accuracy to the PCR testing.”

As their name implies, ‘ID Now’ rapid devices can provide test results for COVID-19 in 15 to 30 minutes. While PCR COVID-19 testing is required for all patients upon hospital admission, and used in the COVID-19 Priority Testing & Assessment Centres, the rapid testing device has proven to be invaluable in the management of COVID-19 patients at Georgetown Hospital.

Letitia McDougall, Patient Care Manager Emergency Obstetrics, and Fracture Clinic at Georgetown Hospital explains that COVID-19 PCR tests are processed in the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital Laboratory, meaning that the turnaround time for the results can take up to 24 hours for Georgetown Hospital patients.

“The rapid test device has made a real difference to our patient care. We can now quickly differentiate between COVID-19 and other diseases that present with similar symptoms. Once we rule COVID-19 out, we can focus on the right treatment in a more timely manner,” explains Ms. McDougall. “Rapid testing has also helped us with decisions around patient placement. We have been able to utilize the patient rooms on our units more safely and efficiently and reduce the risk of spreading the virus.”

Without the rapid test, every new patient at the hospital would need to be isolated for up to 24 hours until their PCR test results came back. With only two single patient rooms at Georgetown Hospital, patients waiting for these results would typically block a room with multiple beds. Using the rapid test means a patient who tests negative for COVID-19 is placed safely, in the right bed, on the right unit.

Ms. McDougall also notes that in an outbreak situation, the rapid test supports the hospital's swift response efforts by identifying index cases by providing more immediate information during outbreak investigations.

“The rapid testing device has been a real game changer at Georgetown Hospital. It provides us with a quick and effective decision tool to maximize our infection control measures and protect our patients, staff and physicians,” explains Cindy McDonnell, Chief Operating Officer, Georgetown Hospital. “I commend the province for introducing it and give huge thanks to our Laboratory Team and care teams across Halton Healthcare who have successfully implemented this new process.”

Background

- PCR testing (also known as polymerase chain reaction testing), is a type of test that tells us if someone currently has a virus.
- There has been a 98.9 % correlation between the test results of the ID Now and the PCR testing to-date across all hospital sites of Halton Healthcare.
- Testing on the ID NOW™ device must be performed within one hour of the specimen collection.
- ID NOW works well as a “one off” testing device for single specimens. It is not suited to mass testing.

- 30 -

About Halton Healthcare

Halton Healthcare is a healthcare organization comprised of three community hospitals - Georgetown Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital and several community programs and services Together we provide healthcare services to nearly 400,000 residents in the communities of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. Halton Healthcare has been recognized for its best practices in a number of patient safety and patient care initiatives. For more information, visit www.haltonhealthcare.com

Media Contact

Emma Murphy
Manager, Communications & Public Affairs
Halton Healthcare
905-845-2571 ext. 4586
289-218-7413