

Dear Director,

June 1, 2022

This letter is to inform you that the Bioforensics Assay Development and Diagnostics section at the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) will be discontinuing our Multiple Locus Variable-Number Tandem Repeat Analysis (MLVA) in favour of Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) analysis for pathogen differentiation and speciation. This change in service will begin July 1, 2022.

A comparative analysis was undertaken to support a transition from MLVA to WGS for several Risk Group 3 pathogens including *Brucella spp.*, *B. anthracis*, *F. tularensis*, *B. pseudomallei* and *Y. pestis*. In all cases, WGS showed equivalent or higher resolution for distinguishing isolates than MLVA. The WGS methods are in accordance with ISO 17025 quality standards and the current turn around time of 14 calendar days for molecular differentiation will not be affected.

If you have concerns or questions pertaining to this change in service, please address them to the Bioforensics Assay Development and Diagnostics section Chief (kym.antonation@phac-aspc.gc.ca).

Kind regards,

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