HIV Point of Care Site Operating Guide

This brief guide provides links to online resources to help you establish and manage an HIV Point of Care Testing Site in Ontario.

The primary objective of point of care testing sites is to provide reliable, accessible testing tailored to the needs of one or more of the key/priority populations (https://hivtestingontario.ca/priority-populations/) living in your local community, who are at an increased risk of acquiring HIV. Ontario has established standards for all HIV testing in Ontario, in the form of the ARCCH principles (https://hivtestingontario.ca/arcch/). Providing HIV testing, supportive counselling and referrals to other resources should be in accordance with these principles.

Establishing an HIV POC Testing Site

Visit https://hivtestingontario.ca/poc/establishing-a-site to learn more about how POC testing sites are approved. If regulated health professionals will not do all testing at the site, medical directives must be in place to extent the authority of a regulated health professional. See https://hivtestingontario.ca/poc/establishing-a-site/

Essential Resources

- Training resources and guidance on quality assurance are offered at http://hivtestingontario.ca
- Testing kits and other materials are ordered through the HIV POC Inventory Management portal at https://www.hivpoct.ca. HIV and Hepatitis C Program staff will provide you with a login.
- Use mailto:customerservicecentre@oahpp.ca to track missing laboratory results or order anonymous serology requisitions. Nominal forms can be downloaded from https://www.publichealthontario.ca
- Templates for quality assurance documents are available at: http://hivtestingontario.ca/poc/quality- assurance-templates/
- Your site's Proficiency Testing (PT) results can be submitted at https://qview.ca/QVIEW/LoginSSO.aspx on the IQMH site. You can find all PT assessment results there as well. Ministry staff will provide log-in information.
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for the kits and controls. Having MSDS available is a WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) requirement.
- Notify the Sexual Health Info Line Ontario (SHILO) about your program's operating hours and services: mailto:shilo@toronto.ca

For any help contact the Ministry at poct@ontario.ca

Point of Care Testing Sites are encouraged to build relationships with service agencies in their area, to stay informed about local referrals, and to expand testing through outreach partnerships. See http://hivtestingontario.ca/poc/outreach-partnerships/

Getting Started

Once you have been approved as an HIV POC testing site by the Ministry, and your Medical Directives are in place, it is time to establish the training and processes necessary to operate your site. The Ministry offers a Next Steps checklist. This checklist describes what to do first and what supplies you need to order.

Training Staff

Each site is responsible for training their testing staff (http://hivtestingontario.ca/poc/training-responsibilities/).

- Training modules are available for test counsellors in both English and French at http://hivtestingontario.ca/poc/counsellor-training/. Modules can be used online or for small group trainings at your site. Other resources such as role-play scenarios are also available.
- Once staff have finished training to your satisfaction, they must complete certification testing to be qualified to test at your site. Review the Quality Assurance training module for more information.

Ordering and Storing Test Kits and Other Supplies

Testing kits and other materials (such as staff certification panels and quality assurance samples) are ordered through the HIV POC Inventory Management portal at https://www.hivpoct.ca. HIV and Hepatitis C staff will provide site staff with an account for the portal. Once staff have access to the portal they can review the inventory management training manual available on the portal.

- You are required to maintain up-to-date records of the kit usage at your site on the portal. Updating kit usage is often done in conjunction with monthly reporting. A user's guide is available on the portal and guidance for monthly reporting is available in the training modules.
- Kits must be stored in a controlled environment between 2-30° C and the temperature tracked daily. A temperature chart is available at http://hivtestingontario.ca/poc/quality-assurance-templates/.

Key Quality Assurance Activities

Effective quality control relies on every member of the testing staff participating in routine activities like accurately completing the daily testing log or monitoring the kit storage temperature. These activities are covered in the HIV test counsellor training at http://hivtestingontario.ca/poc/counsellor-training/. However, sites typically assign a quality assurance lead who oversees all aspects of quality assurance. This person may be the supervisor, or a more senior test counsellor assigned these tasks.

1. Evaluation of testing kits using positive/negative controls must be done regularly:
    - When the kits are first received before any kits are used (sometimes referred to as validating the kits)

- If a temperature reading is recorded outside the 2-30°C range
- Monthly on existing kits

For more about using positive/negative quality controls see the Quality Assurance training module.

2. Proficiency Testing – All testing staff should participate in the regularly scheduled proficiency testing, using the HIV positive and negative concealed panels from IQMH. See QA training module for more information.
3. Monthly reporting is an opportunity to review testing outcomes at your site, to compare POC results with parallel results reported from standard testing, and to update kit usage on the HIV POC Inventory Management portal. More detail is provided in the QA training module.

When Something Goes Wrong

An incident is any unexpected result that occurs during regular testing or during quality assurance procedures. All incidents (and their resolution) should be recorded in the incident log. For more about dealing with incidents, see the Quality Assurance training module. In the event of any inadvertent exposure of staff to testing materials, refer to the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).

If the following incidents occur, you should notify the Ministry immediately at poct@ontario.ca:

- Two invalid tests (or greater than 1% in a one-month period.)
- Two unexpected quality control results (e.g., QC negative produces a QC positive)
- Any negative POC test, followed by a positive laboratory test (even if the client was in the window period; the HIV and Hepatitis C Program needs to alert the manufacturer promptly)
- More than one false reactive POC test (or >1% of tests done in a month)
- Damage to a significant number of newly shipped kits (>5% of the order)

Invalid tests are a rare, but possible outcome of any test. For more details, see the QA module.