

USET Tribal Epidemiology Center

Recommendations for Tribal Consideration

USET TEC COVID-19 Guidance 2020-003: Abbott ID NOW COVID-19 Diagnostic Testing



Background

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian Health Service (IHS) has purchased and distributed a number of point-of-care type laboratory instruments called ID NOW, manufactured by Abbott Diagnostics. The benefit of the technology utilized by ID NOW is that it is able to produce results within 15 minutes. The instruments have been given Emergency Use Authorization by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) which means there is less information available regarding the efficacy of the tests as there would be under the normal approval process. The USET Tribal Epidemiology Center (TEC) has reviewed the available data and it appears that this test is generally accurate and reliable. All laboratory testing has inherent limitations and will reflect a number of false negative and false positive tests. In a pandemic, false negative tests are of particular concern, as a negative test result may result in the spread of COVID-19 due to the potential for increased movement from the person that tested negative. With these considerations in mind, the USET TEC offers the following recommendations for Tribal consideration.

ID NOW COVID-19 Test

- **This test is not designed for mass testing or widespread community-based screening programs among asymptomatic people. Testing asymptomatic people may result in a high rate of false negative tests, which can facilitate the spread of COVID-19. Clinical providers should be allowed to use their clinical judgement in determining testing eligibility for people showing symptoms.**
- To prevent spread of COVID-19, patients with a negative test result but showing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should be given the same isolation/household quarantine instructions and receive the same public health follow-up as those who test positive.
- A community education campaign regarding the limitations of this test (i.e. false negative tests) may need to be conducted to ensure adherence to public health measures instituted among those who test negative.
- Continue to use the USET TEC COVID-19 surveillance tool. This will allow Tribal Nations to follow up with all patients suspected of COVID-19, regardless of test results.