SLO Public Health Laboratory Bulletin

December 2008

Seasons Greetings—

The staff of the Public Health Laboratory send you our best wishes you for a joyous and healthy Holiday Season!

James L Beebe PhD, Laboratory Director and Sharon Beccacio Laboratory Supervisor

Method Change for Chlamydia-Gonorrhea Amplification testing—January 2009

During the first full week of January 2009, Dr Jim Beebe and a vendor representative will visit all agencies submitting specimens for molecular amplification detection of ***Chlamydia trachomatis*** and ***Neisseria gonorrhoeae.*** New collectors will be distributed and old collectors will be retrieved. A brief instructional on the use of the new collectors will be provided as well

The APTIMA method being introduced that week requires proprietary product collectors for specimen submission: These new collectors will replace the Becton-Dickinson (BD) collectors currently in use. Only specimens collected with the New APTIMA-brand collectors will be accepted for testing after distribution. We thank all agencies for their cooperation during this change.

Specimens collected with the BD collectors will be rejected for testing on Thursday January 8th. as testing with the BD method will cease

Specimens accepted for testing will include:

Female: cervical, vaginal, rectal, and pharyngeal APTIMA swab and APTIMA urine specimens

Male: urethral, rectal, pharyngeal APTIMA swab and APTIMA urine specimens.

Influenza virus activity--- quiet on the Western front

CDC viral testing surveillance still shows a low levels of influenza virus activity with only 2.8% of specimens tested yielding positive results for Influenza virus. As prevalence remains low, the probability of a false-positive rapid test for influenza virus remains high. Only when transmission is markedly increased, will rapid tests perform with an acceptable positive predictive value. California activity is currently described as sporadic.

Vaccine coverage for the circulating virus appears good as the antigenic characterization of virus isolates has shown that of 36 isolates tested, 20 are influenza A (H1), three influenza A (H3) and 13 influenza B viruses. All influenza A (H1) viruses were characterized as A/Brisbane/59/2007-like and all influenza A (H3) viruses were characterized as A/Brisbane/10/2007-like, the influenza A (H1N1) and influenza A (H3N2) components included in the 2008-09 influenza vaccine

Influenza B viruses currently circulating can be divided into two antigenically distinct lineages represented by the B/Yamagata/16/88 and B/Victoria/02/87 viruses. Four influenza B viruses were characterized as B/Florida/04/2006-like, belonging to the B/Yamagata lineage, the influenza B component of the 2008-09 influenza vaccine. The remaining nine viruses belong to the B/Victoria lineage. Eight of the nine viruses belonging to the B/Victoria lineage were from one state.