December 11, 2012

**Weak D Testing Procedure Change**

Weak D (Du) testing will be discontinued for all pre-transfusion testing and prenatal workups. **Effective January 3, 2013**

Per national standards recommended by the AABB, PCL Alverno will no longer perform weak D (formerly known as D^u) testing for all pre-transfusion testing and prenatal workups. Weak D typing is not required or encouraged, for transfusion recipients and pregnant women. By eliminating the weak D phase of testing for these patients, some partial D variants that are at risk of forming anti-D will be classified as Rh negative. Therefore, these patients will be candidates for Rh immune globulin during pregnancy and transfused with Rh negative red blood cells.

Weak D testing **will** still be performed on all newborn cord blood samples and if necessary to confirm any discrepancies between typing at different laboratories.

The Rh D antigen is an extremely immunogenic antigen with over 50 mutations having been described, resulting in quantitative and qualitative variants. Weak D (D^u) red cells have been defined as having a reduced amount of D antigen and altered or missing surface proteins, thus requiring an indirect antiglobulin test for detection. Furthermore, current reagents used for Rh testing now in use are more sensitive than those of the past and many weak D variants that previously were only detected in the antiglobulin phase using older polyclonal reagents are now detected by routine typing.

Per AABB recommendations, weak D testing will still be performed on cord blood samples since even a partial-D newborn may alloimmunize a true Rh-negative mother. In addition, weak D testing will be performed when necessary to confirm any discrepancies between typing at different laboratories.

*For further test information, please call our client services department (800) 937-5521*