



**BC Centre for Disease Control**  
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

Dear Health Care Provider:

I am writing on behalf of the *Get Checked Online* (GCO) program. I am the Physician Lead for the Provincial HIV/STI Program at the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), and one of the physicians overseeing the GCO program. As well, I am the ordering provider on all GCO laboratory requisitions, and I am requesting your support as this program is rolled out province-wide.

One of the key components of the GCO program involves the use of codes on all laboratory requisitions (the 'QQ' code; e.g. QQ123456) in place of patient name. GCO clients will receive their results either online (for negative results) or via the telephone (for positive results or invalid samples) from BCCDC nurses. As a result, there will be clients presenting to clinics for treatment of diagnosed STIs, who *will not* have a lab result with their name on it. I am appealing to any physicians and health care providers encountering this to treat GCO clients as you would STI contacts or those presenting with a diagnosed STI with no documentation.

I suggest the following:

- Treat clients according to provincial or Canadian STI guidelines.
- Do not retest the client.

I recognize that there may be some discomfort in providing STI treatment in the absence of a confirmed diagnosis. However, there is precedent for this in our routine clinical practice at BCCDC. At the Provincial STI Clinic, as well as at our satellite outreach sites where we see the largest volumes of STI clients in the province, we routinely provide treatment to clients who self-report being contacts to diagnosed STI cases, as well as individuals who have tested elsewhere but cannot provide documentation of their diagnosis. In these situations, we make the clinical judgment that the risk of delaying therapy in order to retest (e.g. the client not following up, or not being willing to retest as they prefer to remain anonymous) greatly outweighs the risk of immediate treatment, which is minimal.

We have brought these concerns forward to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia (CPSBC), and they have indicated to us that they have no concerns about these procedures, and support this program.

If you would like to discuss concerns – or any other GCO-related issue – further, please do not hesitate to contact me at 604-707-5606. The GCO program represents an exciting innovation in STI testing and is the first program of its kind in Canada. On behalf of the BCCDC and the GCO program, I am hopeful that we can work together with our provincial colleagues to ensure that this novel, essential service succeeds.

Best regards,

Troy Grennan, MD MSc FRCPC