



Memorandum Micro #216

To: UNC Health Physicians, Housestaff, Clinical Nurse Coordinators,
Department Heads, and Supervisors

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Date: November 11, 2022

Subject: Respiratory Panel Testing Guidance

In order to select the most appropriate respiratory panel for your patients, please review the following information regarding the respiratory panels provided by McLendon Clinical Laboratories Clinical Microbiology Laboratory.

The Respiratory Pathogen Panel with COVID (LAB5812) is performed using the BioFire Respiratory Panel 2.1 (RP2.1), a multiplexed test which provides the simultaneous qualitative detection and identification of 22 different respiratory viral and bacterial targets in respiratory samples from individuals with suspected respiratory tract infections. Many insurers will not pay for panel testing that includes more than 6 targets on outpatients. Patients should be informed they might receive a bill for this test, depending on their specific insurance plan.

As an alternative, providers may choose to order Rapid Influenza / RSV / COVID PCR (LAB5811). This test has fewer targets, has better insurer coverage, and is clinically more appropriate in an outpatient setting.

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