MEMORANDUM

TO: Local Health Departments, Regional Health Offices, Infection Control Professionals, Hospital Laboratories, Laboratory Directors and Staff

FROM: Communicable Disease Control Section
       Division of Laboratories

DATE: May 14, 2024

SUBJECT: *Neisseria meningitidis* and *Haemophilus influenzae* clinical materials submission to IDPH

*Neisseria meningitidis* and *Haemophilus influenzae* are bacterial pathogens known to potentially cause serious invasive disease. In Illinois, all cases of invasive disease caused by these organisms are reportable within 24 hours to your local health department. This memo is to serve as a reminder that pursuant to sections 690.441 and 690.555 of the Illinois Control of Communicable Disease Code, all laboratories shall forward clinical materials from a normally sterile site that are positive for *Haemophilus influenzae* (any type) and *Neisseria meningitidis* to the Department's laboratory. Examples of specimens from normally sterile body sites include blood, CSF, pleural fluid, synovial fluid, and specimens obtained via sterile technique from other internal sterile body sites.

All *Haemophilus influenzae* or *Neisseria meningitidis* isolates from sterile site specimens should be sent promptly to the Illinois Department of Public Health IDPH laboratory in Chicago. Laboratories that utilize a commercial or send-out laboratory for identification of these organisms should have a predetermined process for shipping of isolates to the IDPH lab, as per requirements set forth in the Communicable Disease Code. Isolates that are obtained from non-sterile sites, such as wounds, throat swabs, etc., are not required to be submitted to IDPH.

Although culture remains the gold standard, laboratory tests for identification of *Haemophilus influenzae* and *Neisseria meningitidis* via real-time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) are accepted alternatives in certain situations. If any *Haemophilus influenzae* and *Neisseria meningitidis* species detected by PCR assay without identification of the serotype or serogroup, it is important to perform a simultaneous or reflex culture; submission of an isolate to IDPH lab is required even if serotyping/serogrouping was conducted at the commercial or hospital lab. If organisms are nonviable via culture, laboratories should submit adequate clinical samples to IDPH laboratories for serogroup or serotype testing at CDC or a public health reference lab. Please contact the IDPH lab in Chicago or the Communicable Disease Control section for additional guidance. The IDPH test requisition form should be completed and sent with the clinical materials. Prior approval to submit these specimens to the state lab is not required.

If you have questions regarding the collection, shipments, or other laboratory aspects of isolate submission, please reference the IDPH Laboratory Manual of Services or contact the IDPH Chicago laboratory at 312-793-4760. If you have questions regarding surveillance or reporting of these conditions, please contact the Communicable Disease Control Section at 217-782-2016. Please also see the recent HAN by CDC regarding an increase in invasive serogroup Y cases across the US, including Illinois.