Nasopharyngeal Specimen Collection for COVID-19

I. Applicable patients: Patients who have received a referral or order from a clinician (primary care, local health department, medical control physician) for specimen collection.

II. Collection Procedure for Nasal Pharyngeal Sampling:
   A. Don appropriate PPE
      i. N95 Mask
      ii. Gown
      iii. Gloves
      iv. Eye protection
   B. Place patient in seated position
   C. Tilt patient’s head back slightly to visualize nasal passages
   D. Ask patient to remove face mask and close eyes
   E. Gently insert swab along nasal septum, just above the floor of the nasal passage, to the nasopharynx
      i. Stop when resistance is met
      ii. Do not force swab further
      iii. If you detect resistance to the passage of the swab, back off and try reinserting it at a different angle, closer to the floor of the nasal canal.
      iv. The swab should reach a depth equal to the distance from the nostrils to the outer opening of the ear.
   F. Rotate swab several times (keep in passage 10 seconds)
   G. Gently remove swab while rotating
   H. Place swab into collection tube according to directions
      i. Place swab into tube before breaking stick
      ii. Tighten cap securely
   I. Have patient reapply face mask

III. Packaging procedure:
   A. Label tube
      i. Patient name
      ii. Patient DOB
      iii. Source
   B. Place tube in plastic bag with absorbent material
   C. Place sample in 95kPa bag
   D. Place bagged sample on ice pack
   E. Follow instructions according to referral source or ordering physician for shipping or delivery.

IV. Key Information:
   A. Uncomfortable procedure, be gentle with patient
   B. Questions or issues with packaging should be handled by referral source, according to directions on collection materials provided


Bay County Medical Control Authority