

TCAG COVID-19 UPDATE – March 17, 2020



Dear TCAG clients:

The COVID-19 situation is changing daily, and government and institutional responses to this pandemic are escalating. In light of the variety of messaging from different levels of government, we are providing this update.

In line with institutional guidelines, TCAG is implementing a ramp-down in its activities over the next few days. TCAG has been deemed to have essential functions in the SickKids Research Institute and as such, will remain open to complete important experiments and studies as best we are able. We are taking steps to ensure this, with the following modifications to existing practices.

Effective Wednesday March 18, 2020

- TCAG will continue to operate with minimal essential laboratory and management staff. All facilities and services will operate at reduced capacity. Turnaround times for all experiments and procedures may increase.
- There will be no access to TCAG for non-SickKids employees.
- Remote drop-boxes for sequencing samples and oligonucleotide deliveries (at the Medical Sciences Building, MaRS, Mount Sinai Hospital, and the Earth Sciences Centre) will not be used. Samples for Sanger (capillary) sequencing from non-SickKids employees will still be accepted in the Peter Gilgan Centre for Research and Learning (PGCRL) lobby. Oligonucleotides will similarly be available for pickup in the PGCRL lobby (contingent on ongoing delivery from our supplier, IDT).

These policies will allow us to gauge user demand and best determine the number of essential staff required to maintain operations. We are sensitive to concerns about staff safety, and are working with TCAG's personnel on a case-by-case basis where there are important mitigating circumstances. We are also encouraging all social distancing rules at each step along the way.

The above procedures may be modified in future, in accordance with developing institutional guidelines, or in response to changes in availability of supplies or supportive services (e.g., shipping and receiving, glass-washing, sterilization). Additionally, SickKids may implement new or modified access control processes in the coming days, over and above current COVID-19 attestation and badge access.

We will continue to make best efforts to update our clients via the TCAG website as the situation evolves. We appreciate your patience and cooperation.

Any questions can be directed to TCAG's Manager, Jo-Anne Herbrick, jherbrick@sickkids.ca.

Sincerely,

Stephen Scherer, Scientific Director
Lisa Strug, Associate Director
Richard Wintle, Assistant Director
Jo-Anne Herbrick, TCAG Manager