



**Michael Fine, MD, Director**  
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**IMPORTANT REMINDER:**  
**Please utilize these grant funds to reduce barriers to HIV testing**

July 26, 2013

Dear Laboratory Colleagues,

The Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) Office of HIV/AIDS & Viral Hepatitis has received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the State Health Laboratories to support and provide 4<sup>th</sup> Generation HIV Antibody and Antigen Testing for HIV negative individuals at high risk for acquiring the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

**Our grant covers the costs of testing for individuals who are uninsured or underinsured, to eliminate the barrier of cost for persons who are unaware of their HIV status.**

The Abbott 4<sup>th</sup> Generation HIV test is an antigen/antibody combo test that simultaneously detects the presence of HIV p24 antigen and antibodies to HIV-1 and HIV-2 in serum and plasma. The test detects the presence of p24 antigen as early as 7 days post infection, at least a week earlier than the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation test, which was only able to detect HIV-1 and HIV-2 antibodies. For this reason, this 4<sup>th</sup> generation HIV test is ideal for testing high-risk individuals and partners of known HIV-infected individuals.

**Here's how your lab can help the uninsured and underinsured in this effort:**

If you are currently sending blood work for 4<sup>th</sup> generation testing to the state lab:

- **Add an orange sticker** to your requisition form if the person tested is uninsured or underinsured (has inadequate coverage to pay for this HIV test).
- **If you use this sticker**, please do not charge the person getting the test any fees in advance of the test – as that will be covered now by the funds from the orange sticker.

If you are interested in being a part of this project and are not currently sending blood work to the State Health Laboratories:

- Please call (401) 222-4578 for more information.

If you have additional suggestions on how we can more effectively reduce the cost barrier to routinely test for HIV for those patients without adequate insurance coverage or ability to pay:

- Please call (401) 222-4578 for more information.

Thank you for being who you are and what you do. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Fine".

Michael Fine, MD  
Director of Health