



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Office of the Secretary



May 8, 2025

DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

No. 2025 - 0231

FOR: ALL UNDERSECRETARIES OF UHC HEALTH SERVICES CLUSTER IN ALL AREAS, DIRECTORS OF CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT (CHD); MINISTER OF HEALTH-BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (MOH-BARMM); MEDICAL CENTER CHIEFS OF DOH HOSPITALS; DOH-DESIGNATED PRIMARY HIV CARE FACILITIES AND TREATMENT HUBS; AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT: Optimization of Point-of-Care Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (POC-NAAT) Machines for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Tuberculosis (TB) Testing

The National AIDS and STI Prevention and Control Program (NASPCP) and the National Tuberculosis Program (NTP) are jointly committed to strengthening case detection and diagnostic efficiency for both HIV and TB. To achieve this, all clinical laboratories and Rapid TB Diagnostic Laboratories (RTDLs) equipped with point-of-care nucleic acid amplification test (POC-NAAT) machines, including, but not limited to, GeneXpert System, are strongly encouraged to maximize the utilization of these technologies.

This initiative promotes the full integration of POC-NAAT systems across laboratories nationwide to enable concurrent testing for HIV and TB. This will improve diagnostic accuracy, reduce turnaround times, and enhance the capacity for treatment monitoring for both diseases. By adopting this integrated strategy, the health system will be better positioned to deliver timely, effective, and sustainable diagnostic services—ultimately accelerating the national response to both TB and HIV.

Currently deployed POC-NAAT machines, such as the GeneXpert and other similar platforms, should be optimized for the current testing of TB (MTB/RIF, MTB/RIF Ultra) and HIV (HIV-1 Viral Load). These machines are designed to handle multiple test modules for both diseases simultaneously, allowing for more accurate and timely diagnoses.

Optimizing existing infrastructure to handle both TB and HIV testing using a single platform will reduce operational costs, including reagent expenses, maintenance, and equipment procurement. All laboratories equipped with POC-NAAT platforms are expected to optimize their testing capacity for both diseases and to regularly report on machine performance and utilization.

We appreciate your support and collaboration in implementing this important initiative. For further information or clarification, please contact the NASPCP or NTP at hatpcd@doh.gov.ph.

For immediate dissemination and compliance to all concerned.

By the Authority of the ~~Secretary~~ of Health:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Palermo-Maestral', written over the word 'Secretary' in the line above.

MARY ANN PALERMO-MAESTRAL, MD, MBA-HA, FPPS, CHA, FPCHA
Undersecretary of Health
Public Health Services Cluster