



MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 22, 2016

TO: Physicians at Hamilton Health Sciences and
St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton

FROM: Dr. Marek Smieja, Microbiology Discipline Director and Head of Virology, HRLMP
Candy Rutherford, Technical Specialist, Microbiology, HRLMP

RE: **BK Virus Under-Quantification-May 3, 2016 to July 13, 2016**

We are currently investigating the impact of a recent bioMerieux recall of silica, which we use for extracting blood and other specimens for PCR testing. The silica recall involves two lot numbers in use at HRLMP between May 3 and the present. bioMerieux recommends that all labs change their extraction volumes to compensate for this and states the effect is only likely for small DNA viruses.

As of July 13, on receiving this information, we immediately changed our extraction methods to comply with the lower volumes recommended by bioMerieux, and are examining the effects of this change. Over the past week, we performed an investigation of specimens tested since May 2016 for BK, EBV or CMV. BK virus quantification showed an under-quantification of approximately 0.8 logs, whereas no clear effect was seen with CMV or EBV. At this time I recommend:

1. Previously reported plasma BK-DNA quantification between May 3 and July 13 may have been under-estimated by an average of 0.8 logs. Please speak with me and we can repeat any of the previous positives if you require repeat quantification for decision making.
2. No effect on CMV quantification.
3. No clear effect on EBV quantification, but we will continue our investigations prospectively.

I can be reached anytime at 905-522-1155- ext. 35140.

Thank-you for the privilege of serving you and our patients.

Marek Smieja, MD PhD FRCPC
Microbiologist and Infectious Diseases Physician
Professor, Pathology & Molecular Medicine