

23 June 2021

Mr Gerard Hayes  
Secretary  
Health Services Union  
Locked Bag 3  
Australia Square NSW 1215

Dear Gerard

This letter is to advise you that NSW Health Pathology Westmead is proposing the extension of operating hours for our CIDMLS Pathogen Genomics and Serology departments.

The Centre for Infectious Diseases and Microbiology Laboratory Services (CIDMLS) has been the laboratory that the NSW Public Health unit most relies upon during Covid-19 and other outbreaks to assist them in their work in communicable disease control. This is about protecting the health of the people of NSW.

Our role in responding to Public Health outbreaks is critical and this has been recognised by NSW government. In recognition of this, the Ministry has requested that CIDMLS provide a routine 7-day a week service for both Serology and Pathogen Genomics on an ongoing basis. This enhancement of services strengthened the ICPMR-NSW HP position as a reference laboratory within Public Health Laboratory Network of Australia and a partner in innovation and translational research within the Westmead Precinct and beyond.

The current roster for Serology team members are from 7am – 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. Our proposal is to extend the current operating hours to 7am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 6.30pm Saturday and Sunday.

The extended hours will be used to improve the turnaround times of all serological testing, and to facilitate any urgent or confirmatory testing to be performed without delay 7 days a week. Serology team members whom are employed as shift workers will be expected to rotate through the 7-day week roster. To further support the roster requirements, CIDMLS Serology have received funding for a staffing increase of 4.6 FTE.

The current roster for Pathogen Genomics team members are from 6.00am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. Our proposal is to extend the current operating hours to 6.00am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am – 5.30pm Saturday and Sunday. To further support the roster requirements, CIDMLS Pathogen Genomics have received funding for a staffing increase of 6 FTE and the purchase of sequencing and computing equipment to support whole genome sequencing identification of COVID-19 cases 7-days a week.

The following will be undertaken to facilitate this change:

- Consultation has commenced and is ongoing with staff regarding the changes to rostering and new operational requirements

- A revision of the rostering requirements to accommodate the service needs and changes

After appropriate consultation has been undertaken it is intended that these changes will occur effective from August 2021.

If you have any queries please feel free to contact me on (02) 8890 6635.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dominic Dwyer

Medical Virologist

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