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प्रोफेसर (डा.) बलराम भार्गव, पदम श्री

एमडी, डीएम, एफआरसीपी (जी.), एफआरसीपी (ई.), एफएसीसी,
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सचिव, भारत सरकार

स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग
स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय एवं
महानिदेशक, आई सी एम आर

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भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान अनुसंधान परिषद

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DO No. ECD/COVID-19/Misc./2020

Dated July 16, 2020

Subject:- District-wise login credentials for rapid antigen testing for COVID-19

Dear colleagues

At the outset, I would like to convey my appreciation for State/ UT Government's efforts to scale up the COVID-19 testing to save precious lives and save livelihoods. As a nation, everyone has risen to meet this challenge and this combined effort has led to a situation wherein everyday more than 3.20 lakh tests are carried out in the country and in all more than one Crore tests have been done.

2. Key strategy to save lives and protect livelihoods remains 'tests, track, treat'. Our continuous endeavor is to increase testing capacity and provide more and more access to people for testing. ICMR recently approved a point-of-care rapid antigen test for diagnosis of COVID-19, in addition to the already existing molecular diagnostic tools. Antigen test is a promising tool for quick diagnosis of COVID-19.

3. ICMR has advised the use of this test for quick detection of COVID-19 patients in containment zones and hospitals. Please refer to the ICMR advisory dated 14th June 2020 and a subsequent advisory of 23rd June 2020 which can be accessed at:

https://www.icmr.gov.in/pdf/covid/strategy/Advisory_for_rapid_antigen_test14062020.pdf

&

https://www.icmr.gov.in/pdf/covid/strategy/New_additional_Advisory_23062020_3.pdf.

4. In addition, ICMR has invited researchers/ entrepreneurs to come up with such testing kits, which are accurate and useful. Efforts are being made to validate such kits and make multiple options available for use.

5. With the use of antigen tests, more and more tests are being carried out. It is absolutely necessary that all such testing data is uploaded on the ICMR database and all positive cases are brought to the attention of district/ municipal authorities for isolation/ quarantine/ treatment, as the case may be. It is expected that to provide safe healthcare services, all Govt. hospitals/ labs as well as all private NABH/NABL hospitals/labs may initiate antigen testing and also apply for obtaining login credentials for data entry into the ICMR portal. ICMR has been receiving multiple requests from various public sector units, small private/ government facilities, temples, etc. for initiating this testing.

6. In a further effort to **facilitate and further liberalize testing**, ICMR has generated **five common login credentials for each district of your State/ UT**, which may be shared with all Government and private facilities selected for antigen testing. You may nominate a **nodal person from your State/ UT**, who could **contact the ICMR team for obtaining login credentials**. The request for login credentials may be sent at:

ag-govthosp@icmr.gov.in

7. In this CoVid-19 pandemic, to ensure that testing is further enhanced and reporting of the same is done seamlessly, you are advised to take the following steps:

- Respective State/ UT governments should identify/ approve all government and private facilities who would be providing COVID-19 diagnosis through antigen-based assays;
- The common login credentials should be shared with all government and private facilities approved by the state. Individual organizations should not separately approach ICMR now for obtaining logins for antigen testing. **However, ICMR / Mentor Institutes will continue to review and approve all applications for RT-PCR based testing**
- Attached algorithm for interpreting the antigen test should be followed wherein all positives can be labelled as true positives and symptomatic negatives should be subjected to RT-PCR;
- The states should ensure that all the antigen testing points are appropriately linked with RT-PCR facility, where symptomatic negatives will be tested; and
- District-wise login credentials should be shared with all antigen testing sites (Govt. and Private) so that data can be entered into the ICMR portal on a real time basis.

8. May I request you to kindly ensure afore-mentioned steps to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, so that precious lives are saved, and livelihoods are protected too.

With best regards

Yours sincerely



(Balram Bhargava)

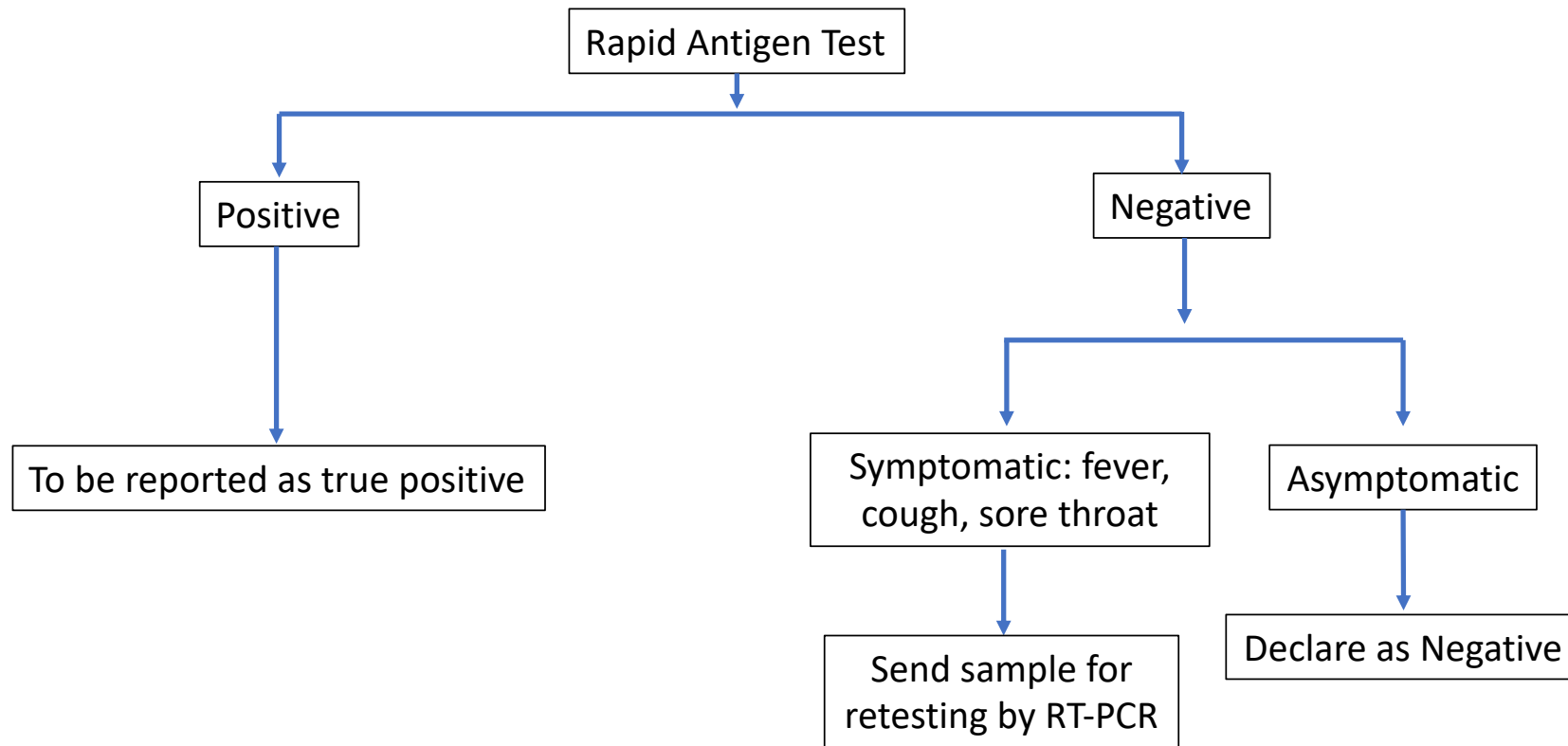
To

All Chief Secretaries

All States / UTs

Enclosed: As above

Algorithm for COVID-19 testing using rapid antigen point-of-care test



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- *All positive and negative results should be entered into the ICMR portal on a real time basis after performing the antigen test.*
 - *Results of samples subjected to RT-PCR should be entered after the RT-PCR results are available.*