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## UC San Diego Partners with 5 Leading Diagnostics Manufacturers to Boost COVID-19 Testing

**Spurred by need and urgency, unprecedented collaboration will increase testing capacity to 1,000 to 1,500 tests per day within 2 to 3 weeks**

Partnering with five leading *in vitro* diagnostics manufacturers, an interdisciplinary team of scientists and physicians at UC San Diego Health and University of California San Diego School of Medicine today announced that the UC San Diego Center for Advanced Laboratory Medicine (CALM) is significantly ramping up testing for COVID-19, projecting a capacity to complete 1,000 to 1,500 tests per day within two to three weeks.



*UC San Diego Center for Advanced Laboratory Medicine.*

The partnerships are with Thermo Fisher Scientific, Roche Diagnostics, GenMark Diagnostics, Luminex Corporation and Abbott Diagnostics.

“UC San Diego has always been a recognized national leader in developing industry partnerships for the greater good,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep Khosla. “This achievement is a perfect example of brilliant minds in the public and private sectors coming together to solve real-world issues and drive innovation. These partnerships are creative, compelling and incredibly important for all of us in these difficult times.”

Patty Maysent, CEO of UC San Diego Health agreed: “These partnerships, executed with unprecedented urgency and speed, signify extraordinary, meaningful progress. They represent greater access soon to COVID-19 testing, not just for our patients and health care workers, but hopefully the larger community in need.”

UC San Diego Health has been conducting in-house COVID-19 testing since March 10, the result of an intensive internal effort by UC San Diego Health doctors and staff. The in-house testing was among the first such efforts in the nation, producing results in hours, rather than days or weeks.

But emerging and widespread challenges across health systems and the nation involving shortages of required chemicals and materials has limited testing to only persons meeting strict diagnostic criteria, such as clear symptoms of disease or known exposure to the virus.

The announced partnerships encompass a broad-based approach using multiple testing platforms with different material requirements and supply chains. They are designed to better overcome the issues of supply, demand — and need.

“Right from the start, we viewed our responsibility as serving not only our patients at UC San Diego Health, but our students, employees and our communities — and perhaps the entire region,” said Steven Gonias, MD, PhD, chief of pathology services for UC San Diego Health and chair of the Department of Pathology at UC San Diego School of Medicine. “With this vision, our work was strongly supported across the board, by Chancellor Khosla, the UC Office of the President and, of course, our private sector partners.”

CALM, which opened in 2011, is a 90,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility near the La Jolla campus. It houses the majority of UC San Diego Health’s clinical laboratories, diagnostic services and related research activities. It is licensed and approved for the most advanced and complex types of lab testing.

Ronald McLawhon, MD, PhD, director of CALM and UC San Diego Clinical Laboratories and chief of the Division of Laboratory and Genomic Medicine, said the facility has been revamped to redirect additional personnel and resources to COVID-19 testing.

“Our entire clinical team understands the importance of this effort in fighting a global pandemic,” McLawhon said. “Many of our most skilled laboratory, technical and management staff have been working around-the-clock under the guidance of doctors David Pride and Sharon Reed to make a real difference.”

David Pride, MD, PhD, is an infectious disease specialist, director of the Clinical Molecular Microbiology Laboratory and associate professor of pathology and medicine at UC San Diego School of Medicine. Sharon Reed, MD, is an infectious disease specialist, director of the Clinical Microbiology and Virology Laboratories and professor of pathology and medicine at UC San Diego School of Medicine.

“All of us continue to explore new ways to further increase testing capacity and to develop new diagnostic laboratory assays that can help guide care and therapy for COVID-19 patients,” Gonias said. “This outbreak isn’t over; neither is our work.”

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