

## Pathology & Laboratory Medicine

---

Pathology & Laboratory Medicine at VA North Texas Health Care System is among the most technologically advanced clinical pathology laboratories in the nation. Extensive laboratory capabilities are also accessible to other health care providers and agencies, including routine



clinical lab tests as well as esoteric testing such as viral load, molecular epidemiology and toxicological drug testing.

### Round the Clock Service

Certified medical technologists are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Staff pathologists are available to assist with interpretation of laboratory data during weekday business hours. A pathologist is always on call for emergency consultation. All verified test results are immediately available to VA providers via our Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS), and to our outside clients via secure printers and/or fax machines.

### More than the Counting

In addition to comprehensive chemistry and hematology testing, surgical pathology, cytology, autopsy, toxicology, transfusion medicine, flow cytometry, bacteriology, molecular biology, mycology, parasitology and immunology are also available. Additional esoteric testing is sent to specialized reference laboratories.

### Service Highlights

**Automated Core Laboratory:** The Dallas core lab features a fully automated chemistry and hematology platform, and was the first VA lab in the country to institute this automated system. This fully integrated system in a high-throughput configuration enables the core lab to handle up to 500 samples per hour.

**Toxicology Testing:** This testing focuses on substance abuse identification and related areas of psychiatric medicine. Reference services provide state-of-the-art detection and identification of abused drugs, therapeutic monitoring of psychoactive drugs, and through our chemistry laboratory, measurement of typically monitored drugs. Substance abuse testing includes rapid turn-around screening and confirmation for the following drugs in urine:

amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, cannabinoids, methadone, opiates, phencyclidine and ethanol.

**HIV-1 RNA by polymerase chain reaction (PCR):** Plasma HIV-1 viral load testing in conjunction with CD4 and T-lymphocyte enumeration has been shown to be an excellent indicator of anti-retroviral therapy efficacy in HIV-1 infected individuals.

**HIV-1 Resistance Testing:** As an adjunct to quantitative viral burden in HIV disease, the laboratory offers the Visible Genetics TRUGENE HIV-1 genotyping assay. This FDA approved test performs sequence analysis of the Protease and Reverse Transcriptase regions of the HIV-1 viral genome on virus isolated from patient plasma. The results of this analysis are then presented in a complete and easy to understand report, ready for charting.

### An Emphasis on Quality

Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Service is accredited by College of American Pathologists, The Joint Commission, Food and Drug Administration, and American Association of Blood Banks. It is affiliated with The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, Texas Tech University, Aston Center, Parkland Health & Hospital System, Zale Lipshy University Hospital, and Children's Medical Center of Dallas. Sam Rayburn Memorial Veterans Center and Fort Worth Outpatient Clinic each contain clinical laboratories that are accredited by the College of American Pathologists. Each VANTHCS laboratory is subject to Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA-88) certification and maintains current CLIA licenses.

## Competitive Pricing

High volumes and technological infrastructure enable VANTHCS to gain economies of scale and offer competitive pricing on the full range of services. This competitive advantage has enhanced business opportunities for VALOR Services, the outreach function of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service. Laboratory sharing agreements with the Urban Inter-Tribal Center of Dallas and other local facilities generates local revenue, and the Dallas lab provides viral load (HIV level) and other testing for all federal prisons in the country through a contract with the Bureau of Prisons.

For more information

Administrative Officer (113)  
Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Service  
VA North Texas Health Care System  
4500 S. Lancaster Rd.  
Dallas, TX 75216  
214 857-0729