



Better health through
laboratory medicine.

January 27, 2021

Jeffrey Dunston Zients
Coordinator of the COVID-19 Response
White House COVID-19 Response Team
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Zients:

The American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACCC) supports President Biden's decision to create a Pandemic Testing Board to assist in the development and implementation of federal policies designed to combat SARS-CoV-2. We believe that greater national coordination is vital to ensuring that the supplies needed to perform COVID-19 testing are produced and distributed in a timely manner. AACCC recommends that the Board seek input from the laboratory community as it develops these policies.

AACCC is a global scientific and medical professional organization dedicated to clinical laboratory science and its application to healthcare. AACCC brings together more than 50,000 clinical laboratory professionals, physicians, research scientists, and business leaders from around the world who are leaders in clinical chemistry, molecular diagnostics, mass spectrometry, translational medicine, lab management, personalized medicine, and other areas of laboratory science that advance healthcare collaboration, knowledge, expertise, and innovation.

Since the onset of the public health crisis, laboratory professionals have developed, validated, and implemented testing for SARS-CoV-2, and in doing so have played a central role in diagnosing, staging, and monitoring patients who have been infected with the virus. Their insight is vital to establishing and sustaining a wholistic approach to combating the pandemic, one that considers the day-to-day realities and challenges that our nation's labs are facing.

These professionals are intimately aware of the pandemic's impact on laboratory operations. Having dealt with the shortage of supplies, they can recommend approaches that take into consideration real-world constraints, such as the testing capacity of instruments and the availability of supplies and personnel needed to perform the tests. This intimate knowledge makes them well positioned to help develop solutions to overcome these limitations.

Since the outset of the pandemic, AACCC has been routinely surveying testing facilities performing COVID-19 to learn about the challenges they are facing. Our most recent survey, which covered December 2- January 4, indicates that 58% of laboratories continue to have problems obtaining the supplies needed to conduct testing, particularly test kits and reagents. Staffing is also becoming an issue due to the growth in COVID-19 testing and the limited number of qualified personnel to perform the tests.

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AACC offers its assistance to the Testing Board as it moves forward. Our association has been actively involved in policy discussions pertaining to this issue over the course of the past year, including serving on the National Testing Implementation Forum. We look forward to working with you on this most important issue.

If you have any questions, please email Vince Stine, PhD, AACC's Senior Director of Government and Global Affairs, at vstine@aacc.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David G. Grenache". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "G".

David G. Grenache, PhD, D(ABCC)
President, AACC