

## Media Backgrounder

### BioMark: New Testing Method

The Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory is implementing a ground-breaking new technology in infectious disease testing that is faster, more accurate and less expensive than past methods.

BioMark, the new testing method, will allow SDCL to test for many different diseases at the same time, rather than doing separate tests for a specific disease, saving time and money. The new process will quickly identify diseases such as influenza A and norovirus. The technology is capable of providing up to 96 results per sample.

Dr. Nick Antonishyn and his team at the SDCL have adapted this technology with the help of Fluidigm.

#### **What will this testing mean for patients?**

It will mean quicker, more accurate results for patients.

#### **Is this really a world-first using the technology for health care?**

Yes, this is the first time this technology has been applied to detecting infectious diseases. We're aware of others now also looking into it such as the Centre for Disease Control in the United States, but they're in the research and development phase for a different application. We can be proud of the innovative work being done by our own Saskatchewan scientists.

#### **What is molecular diagnostics?**

Molecular diagnostics is the analysis of genetic patterns. In this case, we are using the science to aid in the diagnosis of infectious disease. It's not limited to infectious disease testing since it has application to medical genetics -- both inherited disease and acquired disease such as cancer testing.

#### **What is Fluidigm technology?**

It's a process of moving liquids within a gel-like chip. With this technology, minute quantities of sample are needed. This makes the technology cost-effective for the health care system.