

## ICMR scales up capacity to fight COVID-19

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**The scientists are relentlessly working to ensure India flattens the growth curve of the pandemic**



The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is working relentlessly to implement scientific interventions to combat the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic. The Council has expanded its capacity to diagnose and manage COVID-19.

ICMR has procured 10 lakh Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) kits used for diagnosis and 7 depots have been established for uninterrupted supply of reagents across the nation for efficient distribution to government testing laboratories.

New RT-PCR kits are being validated by 4 ICMR institutes for their use. Till now, 19 non-US FDA EUA/CE IVD real-time RT-PCR kits have been validated of which 05 have been recommended based on 100% concordance with positive and negative samples. The recommendations have 2 | P a g e been shared with the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation(CDSCO) for taking it forward.

Apart from this, antibody-based tests have also been made available for sero-surveillance. However, antibody tests are not suitable to diagnose live COVID-19 infections. ICMR has released advisory to start rapid antibody based blood test for COVID-19 as a strategy for areas reporting clusters (containment zone) and in large migration gatherings/evacuees centres.

ICMR has validated and recommended 7 such test kits for use. In addition to this, all US-FDA/EU CE approved RT-PCR and antibody kits can be used for COVID19 diagnosis after approval from Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) and intimation to ICMR.

ICMR has validated and recommended Truenat™ beta CoV test on Truelab™ workstation as a screening test. All positives through this platform will need to be reconfirmed by confirmatory assays for SARS-CoV-2. All negatives may not be processed further. Currently, there are nearly 300 Truelab™ workstation already deployed in country and it will be utilized for the testing.