

## Delays When Ordering Molecular Tests for Inpatients Due to the CMS "14 Day" Rule

### Potential Action Items

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- Working with senior administration to develop an approved center policy for molecular testing for inpatient diagnosis; educating staff and physicians about policy

### Ideas for Process Improvement

Learning lab participants indicated that over half of their lung cancer patients are diagnosed in the inpatient setting because these patients often lack primary care providers and they present to the emergency room with severe pulmonary symptoms that warrant medical admission. Once admitted, the patients undergo a battery of diagnostic tests and procedures that lead to the diagnosis of lung cancer.

The "14 Day Rule" is a regulation set by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that requires hospitals to wait 14 days after the patient is discharged in order for the lab to receive reimbursement for molecular testing.<sup>[1]</sup>

Learning lab participants agreed that the 14 Day Rule significantly impairs their ability to offer timely care for many lung cancer patients so their leadership committees are examining ways to develop standardized processes to manage lung biopsies performed in an inpatient setting.

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### References

[1][Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, HHS. § 414.510 Laboratory date of service for clinical laboratory and pathology specimens.](#)