

29 April 2020

COVID-19 equipment for the Mount Isa Hospital will fast-track results

Queensland Health, the Laura Johnson Home and Glencore have worked collaboratively to secure crucial COVID-19 testing equipment for the Mount Isa Hospital.

Glencore has provided \$45,000 for a new GeneXpert IV-4 instrument, cartridge and nasal swab collection kit that will enable local testing, and dramatically reduce the timeframe for test results.

Until now, COVID-19 nasal swab samples had to be flown from Mount Isa to Brisbane or Townsville for analysis, but with reductions in flights to the region, a lag in receiving results identified the need for on-site COVID-19 test analysis equipment.

The new equipment means results can be obtained within three hours, compared with up to three and a half days previously.

The North West Hospital and Health Service's Acting Chief Executive, Dr Karen Murphy, has welcomed the new equipment and said it was vital that the region expanded its local testing capacity.

"The GeneXpert tests are accurate and have a turnaround time of around three hours. While the cartridges needed for the machine are still in short supply, this equipment will be crucial for diagnosing urgent cases," she said.

"Previously, testing for COVID-19 has been dependent on airlines and external labs, but with this equipment funded by Glencore, we now have the safety net that we deserve in North West Queensland.

"Quicker turnaround times and testing closer to home is critical to rural and remote locations and, in particular, our vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities."

Dr Ulrich Orda, Director of the Emergency Department at Mount Isa Hospital, said this machine would also be a valuable asset long-term.

"It can analyse other respiratory viruses, staph infections, influenza A and B, and some STD's, so it has further application beyond the Coronavirus pandemic," he said.

"Prompt diagnosis means we can start treatment immediately, isolate the patient, and curb potential exposure to the community."

Follow us on social media: [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [v](#)

Betty Kiernan, Chief Executive Officer for the Laura Johnson Home, said the organisation was pleased to lend support and assistance for the acquisition of this valuable piece of equipment.

“While it is important for the testing of all suspected cases, it is invaluable for all front-line Health and Aged Care Workers are tested promptly.

“It reduces the stress of delayed results and assists in keeping our front-line staff where they are needed most,” she said.

Maryann Wipaki, General Manager for Health, Safety, Environment and Community for Glencore, said partnering with our local community is one of the key pillars of Glencore’s business.

“In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Glencore has targeted its funding towards purchasing vital medical testing equipment to improve testing capability, with a rapid test result. This eliminates the need to transport test swabs through the airlines,” she said.

Globally Glencore has established a \$25 million Community Support Fund to assist communities during the Coronavirus pandemic. Glencore is working closely with governments, health agencies, and other key responders to identify their needs to provide the most effective response possible.

Ends

For further information, please contact:

Media

Sally Brady	m: +61 428 043 787	sally.brady@health.qld.gov.au
Nadine Roberts	m: +61 436 341 650	Nadine.roberts@glencore.com.au
Jemma Schweikert	m: +61 412 126 510	Jemma.schweikert@glencore.com.au

Notes for editors:**About Glencore**

Glencore is one of the world's largest global diversified natural resource companies and a major producer and marketer of more than 60 commodities. The Group's operations comprise over 150 mining and metallurgical sites and oil production assets.

With a strong footprint in both established and emerging regions for natural resources, Glencore's industrial and marketing activities are supported by a global network of offices located in over 35 countries.

Glencore's customers are industrial consumers, such as those in the automotive, steel, power generation, battery manufacturing and oil sectors. We also provide financing, logistics and other services to producers and consumers of commodities. Glencore's companies employ around 158,000 people, including contractors.

Glencore is proud to be a member of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and the International Council on Mining and Metals. We are an active participant in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.



www.facebook.com/GlencoreAus



www.twitter.com/GlencoreAUS



www.linkedin.com/company/8518



www.youtube.com/glencorevideos