COVID19 testing notice:

The VMC “rapid” COVID19 in house test is the GenMark SARS-CoV-2 Test for the qualitative detection of SARS-CoV-2 virus in nasopharyngeal swab samples from patients suspected of COVID-19. NOTE: “A not detected/negative test result for this test means that SARS-CoV-2 RNA was not present in the specimen above the limit of detection. However, a negative result does not rule out COVID-19 and should not be used as the sole basis for treatment or patient management decisions. A negative result does not exclude the possibility of COVID-19. If COVID-19 is still suspected based on exposure history together with other clinical findings, re-testing should be considered”.

Sampling issues: (NEJM 382;12, 2020)

- Oro-pharyngeal (OP) swab vs Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab
  - NP swabs show higher viral RNA in quantitative PCR tests in both symptomatic and asymptomatic patients.
  - Current inhouse and Quest tests require an NP sample
- Time of sampling (doi: https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.03.05.20030502)
  - Quantity of viral RNA in NP samples drops off each day post onset of symptoms.
  - Viral load kinetics, seroconversion and clinical observations in individual cases:

Current sampling guidelines
- NP swab testing is only sample acceptable at present for VMC or Quest COVID19 testing.
- Early sampling may be important to get True-Positive result.
- Negative testing does not R/O COVID19 diagnosis.