December 2021



Increase In Oral Fluid Testing Opens Way for More Telehealth Collections

The COVID-19 pandemic has rearranged many things in the world, including how drug testing services are delivered. For instance, as the pandemic really took charge, many occupational health clinics were overrun with COVID-related cases, as waiting rooms filled with sick people. This resulted in many clinics either discontinuing drug test sample collections or being so backed up with COVID-related cases that sample collection services were no longer reliable. Add to that the fact that a growing number of workers were not comfortable visiting collection facilities where sick people gathered, and employers found themselves scrambling to find other ways to get samples collected for drug tests.

Oral fluid testing, with its anywhere, anytime donor-driven collection process, suddenly became the fastest growing segment of the drug testing industry. According to Quest Diagnostics, oral fluid testing at the giant laboratory increased from 1.3 million tests in 2018 to more than 2 million in 2020. In a 2021 survey conducted by the Current Consulting Group (CCG), 21% of employers indicated they had added or switched to lab-based oral fluid testing, up from 14% the previous year. Additionally, 12% said they were using rapid-result oral fluid testing, which was up from 8% the previous year.

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