

**DATE:** September 29, 2011

**FROM:** Robert Coombs, MD, PhD, ACTG Network Laboratory Principal Investigator  
Susan A. Fiscus, PhD, IMPAACT Network Laboratory Principal Investigator

**TO:** All ACTG/IMPAACT Laboratories

**CC:** Primary Network Laboratory (PNL), CTU/CRS PIs, Lab Directors/Manager

**RE:** Required use of the VQA 200 cp/ml control for all ACTG/IMPAACT viral load assays

**\*\*Please forward this information to the relevant lab personnel at your site.\*\***

The purpose of this memo is to remind all ACTG/IMPAACT affiliated laboratories performing viral load testing that the VQA HIV RNA 200 cp/ml control needs to be included in all Abbott Realtime HIV-1 and COBAS AmpliPrep/COBAS Taqman HIV-1 viral load assay runs that include protocol samples or VQA EQA panels; testing performed by CLIA certified clinical laboratories for screening and eligibility is excluded from this requirement. However, HIV-1 RNA assays performed from dried blood spots must also include the VQA 200 control for run validation. Use of the VQA 200 cp/ml control was mandated in January 2011. Since that time, the VQA has provided additional information regarding this assay control and the ranges to be used for the Abbott assay vs. the TaqMan assay. This additional information can be found in the attached May 2011 memo from the VQA.

All laboratories should be submitting viral load data via the LDMS for supported assays (see the LDMS RNA and DNA results memo attached). The LDMS requires the 200 cp/ml control to be included on any Abbott or Taqman run including ACTG/IMPAACT or VQA specimens. The 200 cp/ml control data can be added to the LDMS prior to resulting an assay in the VQA Kit Entry Module, or on the assay preview tab prior to resulting the run. On the rare occasion that viral load data is submitted in any other way than via the LDMS, the VQA 200 cp/ml assay control data must be included with that submission.

Please contact the ACTG Laboratory Coordination office ([actglaboratorycoordination@s-3.com](mailto:actglaboratorycoordination@s-3.com)), the IMPAACT Central Laboratory Group ([impaact.qaqc@fstf.org](mailto:impaact.qaqc@fstf.org)), or LDMS User support ([ldmshelp@fstf.org](mailto:ldmshelp@fstf.org)) if you have any questions.