



August 6, 2020

Gloria Lee, Ph.D.  
Senior Director, Regulatory Affairs  
Helix OpCo LLC (dba Helix)  
101 S. Ellsworth Ave. Suite 350  
San Mateo, CA 94491

Device: Helix COVID-19 NGS Test

Company: Helix OpCo LLC (dba Helix)

Indication: Qualitative detection of nucleic acid from SARS-CoV-2 in upper respiratory specimens (nasopharyngeal swabs, oropharyngeal (throat) swab, mid-turbinate nasal swabs and anterior nasal swabs) from individuals suspected of COVID-19 by their healthcare provider.

Testing is limited to the Helix Laboratory located at 9875 Towne Centre Drive, San Diego, CA 92121, which is certified under Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA), 42 U.S.C. §263a, and meets requirements to perform high complexity tests.

Dear Dr. Lee:

This letter is in response to your<sup>1</sup> request that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issue an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for emergency use of your product,<sup>2</sup> pursuant to Section 564 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (the Act) (21 U.S.C. §360bbb-3).

On February 4, 2020, pursuant to Section 564(b)(1)(C) of the Act, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) determined that there is a public health emergency that has a significant potential to affect national security or the health and security of United States citizens living abroad, and that involves the virus that causes COVID-19. Pursuant to Section 564 of the Act, and on the basis of such determination, the Secretary of HHS then declared that circumstances exist justifying the authorization of emergency use of in vitro diagnostics for detection and/or diagnosis of the virus that causes COVID-19 subject to the terms of any authorization issued under Section 564(a) of the Act.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> For ease of reference, this letter will use the term “you” and related terms to refer to Helix OpCo LLC (dba Helix).

<sup>2</sup> For ease of reference, this letter will use the term “your product” to refer to the Helix COVID-19 NGS Test used for the indication identified above.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Determination of a Public Health Emergency and Declaration that Circumstances Exist Justifying Authorizations Pursuant to Section 564(b) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act*, 21 U.S.C. § 360bbb-3. 85 FR 7316 (February 7, 2020).

Having concluded that the criteria for issuance of this authorization under Section 564(c) of the Act are met, I am authorizing the emergency use of your product, described in the Scope of Authorization of this letter (Section II), subject to the terms of this authorization.

### **I. Criteria for Issuance of Authorization**

I have concluded that the emergency use of your product meets the criteria for issuance of an authorization under Section 564(c) of the Act, because I have concluded that:

1. The SARS-CoV-2 can cause a serious or life-threatening disease or condition, including severe respiratory illness, to humans infected by this virus;
2. Based on the totality of scientific evidence available to FDA, it is reasonable to believe that your product may be effective in diagnosing COVID-19, and that the known and potential benefits of your product when used for diagnosing COVID-19, outweigh the known and potential risks of your product; and
3. There is no adequate, approved, and available alternative to the emergency use of your product.<sup>4</sup>

### **II. Scope of Authorization**

I have concluded, pursuant to Section 564(d)(1) of the Act, that the scope of this authorization is limited to the indication above.

### **Authorized Product Details**

Your product is a qualitative test for the detection of nucleic acid from SARS-CoV-2 in respiratory specimens listed in the indication above collected from individuals suspected of COVID-19 by their healthcare provider. The SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid is generally detectable in respiratory specimens during the acute phase of infection. Positive results are indicative of the presence of SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid; clinical correlation with patient history and other diagnostic information is necessary to determine patient infection status. Positive results do not rule out bacterial infection or co-infection with other viruses. Negative results do not preclude SARS-CoV-2 infection and should not be used as the sole basis for patient management decisions. Negative results must be combined with clinical observations, patient history, and epidemiological information.

To use your product, SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid is first extracted, isolated and purified from the specimens. The purified nucleic acid is then reverse transcribed into cDNA followed by library generation, sequence library pooling and amplicon based next generation sequencing on the Illumina NovaSeq 6000 Sequencing System described in the authorized labeling (described below).

---

<sup>4</sup> No other criteria of issuance have been prescribed by regulation under Section 564(c)(4) of the Act.

The product uses all commercially sourced materials or other authorized materials and authorized ancillary reagents commonly used in clinical laboratories as described in the authorized labeling.

Your product requires the following control materials, or other authorized control materials (as specified under Condition P below), that are processed in the same way as the patient samples and are required to be included with each batch of specimens tested with your product. All controls listed below must generate expected results in order for a test to be considered valid, as outlined in the authorized labeling:

- **Batch-level Positive Control** - For each 384 well plate, a positive control sample using heat inactivated SARS-CoV-2 virus in negative anterior nares clinical matrix in Mawi transport medium is included to assess reagent purity, and cross contamination.
- **Batch-level Negative Control** - molecular-grade, nuclease-free, non-DEPC-treated water is used to monitor non-specific amplification, cross-contamination during experimental setup, and nucleic acid contamination of reagents. One negative control is included on each 384 well plate.
- **Human Positive Control (IPC)** – RnaseP Primer (RPP30) provides a human and extraction positive control. This is expected in each well with clinical samples irrespective of SARS-CoV-2 presence or absence.
- **External Positive Control** - S Synthetic Control RNA Spike is used to monitor for failures of reverse transcriptase, PCR and reaction conditions. This provides a negative control for each well for reverse transcription and amplification of the viral sequence.

The above described product, is authorized to be accompanied with the “Helix COVID-19 NGS Test” laboratory procedures and the EUA Summary (available at <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-emergency-use-authorizations-medical-devices/vitro-diagnostics-euas>), and the following information pertaining to the emergency use, which is required to be made available to healthcare providers and patients:

- Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers: Molecular Laboratory Developed Test (LDT) COVID-19 Authorized Tests
- Fact Sheet for Patients: Molecular Laboratory Developed Test (LDT) COVID-19 Authorized Tests

The above described product, when accompanied by the “Helix COVID-19 NGS Test” laboratory procedures, the EUA Summary (identified above) and the two Fact Sheets (collectively referenced as “authorized labeling”) is authorized to be used under this EUA, despite the fact that it does not meet certain requirements otherwise required by applicable federal law.

I have concluded, pursuant to Section 564(d)(2) of the Act, that it is reasonable to believe that the known and potential benefits of your product, when used consistent with the Scope of

Authorization of this letter (Section II), outweigh the known and potential risks of your product.

I have concluded, pursuant to Section 564(d)(3) of the Act, based on the totality of scientific evidence available to FDA, that it is reasonable to believe that your product may be effective in diagnosing COVID19, when used consistent with the Scope of Authorization of this letter (Section II), pursuant to Section 564(c)(2)(A) of the Act.

FDA has reviewed the scientific information available to FDA, including the information supporting the conclusions described in Section I above, and concludes that your product (as described in the Scope of Authorization of this letter (Section II)) meets the criteria set forth in Section 564(c) of the Act concerning safety and potential effectiveness.

The emergency use of your product under this EUA must be consistent with, and may not exceed, the terms of this letter, including the Scope of Authorization (Section II) and the Conditions of Authorization (Section IV). Subject to the terms of this EUA and under the circumstances set forth in the Secretary of HHS's determination under Section 564(b)(1)(C) of the Act described above and the Secretary of HHS's corresponding declaration under Section 564(b)(1) of the Act, your product is authorized for the indication above.

### **III. Waiver of Certain Requirements**

I am waiving the following requirements for your product during the duration of this EUA:

- Current good manufacturing practice requirements, including the quality system requirements under 21 CFR Part 820 with respect to the design, manufacture, packaging, labeling, and storage of your product.

### **IV. Conditions of Authorization**

Pursuant to Section 564(e) of the Act, I am establishing the following conditions on this authorization:

#### **Helix OpCo LLC (dba Helix) (You)**

- A. Your product must comply with the following labeling requirements under FDA regulations: the intended use statement (21 CFR 809.10(a)(2), (b)(2)); adequate directions for use (21 U.S.C. 352(f)), (21 CFR 809.10(b)(5), (7), and (8)); appropriate limitations on the use of the device including information required under 21 CFR 809.10(a)(4); and any available information regarding performance of the device, including requirements under 21 CFR 809.10(b)(12).
- B. You will inform relevant public health authorities of this EUA, including the terms and conditions herein, and any updates made to your product and authorized labeling.
- C. You will notify the relevant public health authorities of your intent to run your product.

- D. You will have a process in place for reporting test results to healthcare providers and relevant public health authorities, as appropriate.
- E. You will include with test result reports, all authorized Fact Sheets. Under exigent circumstances, other appropriate methods for disseminating these Fact Sheets may be used, which may include mass media.
- F. You will make available on your website(s), if applicable, the Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers and the Fact Sheet for Patients.
- G. You are authorized to make available additional information relating to the emergency use of your product that is consistent with, and does not exceed, the terms of this letter of authorization.
- H. You will use your product as outlined in the authorized labeling. Deviations from the authorized laboratory procedures, including the authorized instruments, authorized extraction methods, authorized clinical specimen types, authorized control materials, authorized other ancillary reagents and/or authorized materials required to use your product are not permitted.
- I. You will collect information on the performance of your product. You will report to Division of Microbiology (DMD)/Office of Health Technology 7 (OHT7)-Office of In Vitro Diagnostics and Radiological Health (OIR)/Office of Product Evaluation and Quality (OPEQ)/Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH) (via email: [CDRH-EUA-Reporting@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:CDRH-EUA-Reporting@fda.hhs.gov)) any suspected occurrence of false positive or false negative results and significant deviations from the established performance characteristics of your product of which you become aware.
- J. You may request changes to the Scope of Authorization (Section II in this letter) of your product. Such requests will be made in consultation with DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH, and require concurrence of, Office of Counterterrorism and Emerging Threats (OCET)/Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS)/Office of the Commissioner (OC) and DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.
- K. You may request changes to the authorized labeling. Such requests will be made in consultation with, and require concurrence of, DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.
- L. You may request the addition of other instruments and associated software for use with your product. Such requests will be made in consultation with, and require concurrence of, DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.
- M. You may request the addition of other extraction methods for use with your product. Such requests will be made in consultation with, and require concurrence of, DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.
- N. You may request the addition of other specimen types for use with your product. Such

requests will be made in consultation with, and require concurrence of, DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.

- O. You may request the addition and/or substitution of primers or probes for use with your product. Such requests will be made in consultation with, and require concurrence of, DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.
- P. You may request the addition and/or substitution of control materials for use with your product. Such requests will be made in consultation with, and require concurrence of, DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.
- Q. You may request the addition and/or substitution of other ancillary reagents and materials for use with your product. Such requests will be made in consultation with, and require concurrence of, DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.
- R. You will evaluate the analytical limit of detection and assess traceability of your product with any FDA-recommended reference material(s), if requested by FDA<sup>5</sup>. After submission to FDA and DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH's review of and concurrence with the data, FDA will update the EUA summary to reflect the additional testing. Such updates will be made in consultation with, and require concurrence of, DMD/OHT7-OIR/OPEQ/CDRH.
- S. You will track adverse events, including any occurrence of false results with your product and report any such events to FDA under 21 CFR Part 803.
- T. All laboratory personnel using your product must be appropriately trained in molecular techniques and use appropriate laboratory and personal protective equipment when handling this product, and use your product in accordance with the authorized laboratory procedure.
- U. You will ensure that any records associated with this EUA are maintained until otherwise notified by FDA. Such records will be made available to FDA for inspection upon request.

### **Conditions Related to Printed Materials, Advertising and Promotion**

- V. All descriptive printed matter, including advertising and promotional materials, relating to the use of your product shall be consistent with the authorized labeling, as well as the terms set forth in this EUA and the applicable requirements set forth in the Act and FDA regulations.

---

<sup>5</sup> Traceability refers to tracing analytical sensitivity/reactivity back to an FDA-recommended reference material. FDA may request, for example, that you perform this study in the event that we receive reports of adverse events concerning your authorized test.

- W. No descriptive printed matter, including advertising or promotional materials, relating to the use of your product may represent or suggest that this test is safe or effective for the detection of SARS-CoV-2.
- X. All descriptive printed matter, including advertising and promotional materials, relating to the use of your product shall clearly and conspicuously state that:
- This test has not been FDA cleared or approved;
  - This test has been authorized by FDA under an EUA for use by the Helix Laboratory located at 9875 Towne Centre Drive, San Diego, CA 92121;
  - This test has been authorized only for the detection of nucleic acid from SARS-CoV-2, not for any other viruses or pathogens; and
  - This test is only authorized for the duration of the declaration that circumstances exist justifying the authorization of emergency use of in vitro diagnostics for detection and/or diagnosis of COVID-19 under Section 564(b)(1) of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. § 360bbb-3(b)(1), unless the authorization is terminated or revoked sooner.

The emergency use of your product as described in this letter of authorization must comply with the conditions and all other terms of this authorization.

#### **V. Duration of Authorization**

This EUA will be effective until the declaration that circumstances exist justifying the authorization of the emergency use of in vitro diagnostics for detection and/or diagnosis of COVID-19 is terminated under Section 564(b)(2) of the Act or the EUA is revoked under Section 564(g) of the Act.

Sincerely,

---

RADM Denise M. Hinton  
Chief Scientist  
Food and Drug Administration

Enclosure