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Pathology Department

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Hospital

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Northern Devon Healthcare 
NHS Trust

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New Clinical Staff Appointments

Mr. Andrew Lansdell has been appointed as full time Principal Biochemist and is based in the Biochemistry Dept at N.D.D.H. Andy will be able to offer clinical advice in relation to patients biochemical status, relevance of particular tests for patient investigations and general advice on the biochemistry service.

He is keen to educate staff and users of the service, has a formal teaching qualification and will consider any requests for teaching sessions either on or off site. Andy can be contacted on 01271 322419 or internal extension 2419.

Following the retirement of Biochemistry manager, Philip Parker in January, after over 40 years service, we have re-structured the technical and

managerial roles in the department. Tim Watts, previously Haematology manager, has now assumed responsibility for all technical and managerial issues in both Biochemistry and Haematology. Tim can be contacted on 01271 370232 or internal extension, 3232.

Dr Tom Lewis has started work as consultant medical microbiologist, and is also based in the Pathology Department at N.D.D.H. Tom trained in the West Midlands region. His main role will be the development of initiatives to help control the use of antibiotics. This will include review of antibiotic policies and education on infection management.

He will be working closely with consultant microbiology colleagues Dr Gail Speirs and Dr David Richards. The team

are very keen to be contacted about the management of specific cases, and also around more general issues concerning diagnosis and treatment of infections. Tom can be contacted on 01271 322384, or internal extension 2384.

Electronic Results Sent more Frequently to GPs

To improve the turnaround times of getting Biochemistry, Haematology and Microbiology results to GP practices, we have increased the numbers of times we release completed results.

Results are now released at 09:00, 10:00, 13:00, 14:00, 15:00 and 21:00 every day and should be available to practices shortly after being released.

We hope you find this improvement useful.

How to Access

Pathology on Tarkanet

Most NDHT PCs have a link to Tarkanet on the desktop. Also, clicking on the internet explorer icon should open Tarkanet. NDHT I.T. Services Dept (01271 322697) tell us that all GP Practices should also have a link to Tarkanet—please contact them if this is not the case.

From the Tarkanet home page:

Click the blue 'Documentation' Tab.

Click on the word 'Manuals' in the list shown.

Click on the word 'Pathology Handbook' from the list of manuals.

Labs Granted Accreditation—Quality Assured

The Microbiology and Cellular Pathology laboratories have been granted the 'Accredited' status by the external assessment body, Clinical Pathology Accreditation (UK) Ltd, (CPA). This means that they have been independently assessed and found to have achieved a high level of quality throughout— and

comply with the 'Standards for the Medical laboratory, issued by CPA.

The Biochemistry and Haematology labs are very near becoming accredited, this is dependant on finalizing the on-call arrangements which will ensure that staff are compliant with the European

Working Time Directive, and are not working more hours than they should be.

CPA fully assesses the laboratory every four years, with an interim visit two years after the full visit. We have a team of dedicated staff working in all departments to maintain and where possible improve the service we provide.

Coming Soon!

National Learning Management Scheme (NMLS) e learning package which will include a comprehensive Blood Transfusion training section. This will be suitable for all grades of clinical staff with additional sections for Laboratory staff, support workers etc. This will be available from April. Further details from Learning and Development— telephone: 01237 420261.

(See also Transfusion Competency article on page 3).

“...A relevant and concise clinical summary can make all the difference in assuring that appropriate investigations are made. ...”

Specimen Acceptance Policy

Request Forms must be labelled with 3 key identifiers

Specimens must be labelled with 2 key patient identifiers (transfusion specimens need 3)

Key patient identifiers are:

Full name (not initials or preferred names), DOB, and unique number (NHS, hospital, A/E, F. Planning or GUM)

Specimen and request form information must match and be correct. Transfusion forms must be signed.

For more details or a copy of the full policy, contact the Pathology Quality Manager—see back cover for contact number.

Importance of Clinical Details on Request Forms

Can I make a plea for greater vigilance in filling in the request forms.

In a recent survey 1 in 4 (24.7%) of request forms from family practitioners had no clinical summary at all.

A relevant and concise clinical summary can make all the difference in assuring that appropriate investigations are made. This particularly applies to requests for thyroid function tests, when it is essential to know whether the patient is on replacement T4 or on an anti-thyroid drug. A similar situation exists with requests for Anti-nuclear antibody (ANA for connective tissue disease) or auto-immune profile (AIP for hepatic disease), especially if follow-up tests are to be appropriately added, requests should clearly state the clinical symptoms.

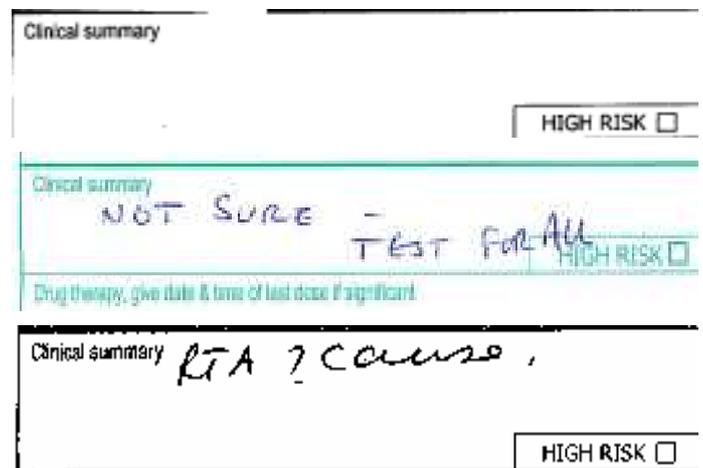
You will no doubt all be aware of the introduction of new urine collection devices which I hope are proving useful. The introduction of the plain white

tube allows us to centrifuge and process urine in a timely and convenient way. This minimises the chances of error, with the rapidly accelerating burden of urine albumin: creatinine ratio requests (5000 per annum in 2004, >11000 p.a in 2009).

May I also mention at this point that samples which are clearly dipstick positive for protein should not be tested for urine albumin:Creatinine

ratios, but should proceed directly to protein : creatinine ratios if required. Finally, may I thank you for your continued support, and encourage you to contact us should you have and problems with either the interpretation of the results or criticisms of the service.

Andy Lansdell. Principal Clinical Biochemist, telephone: 01271 322419 or internal text. 2419.



Some of the clinical details received on request forms

Supplying Information for Pathology Supplies

Thousand of tests are processed every week in the labs, and in order to collect the specimens for analysis we send out packages containing pathology consumables such as blood collection tubes, swabs, specimen bags, request forms and pre-filled histology pots.

Marcus Milton and Debbie Martinelli receive your Pathology Order Forms and pack up the required items and send them out to you. On occasions, some of the order forms

are not completed clearly, resulting in a delay in sending out the supplies.

They have asked that order forms are completed so that the actual numbers of items are indicated on the forms—not just a tick in the box. Also, the name of the person completing the form, and address of where to send the supplies, is essential. “We see forms where there is only a telephone number in the address box, and this delays the

order being dispatched. Where there is only a tick in the amount boxes, we only send a few items, so requesters may not get the number of items they actually wanted.”

Contact Marcus or Debbie in the Pathology Supplies Office on 01271 322342 or internal extension, 23242.

BLOOD COLLECTION TUBES		
TE-	BLUE	(200)
	MAUVE	(200)
RAL-	RED/YELLOW	(200)
ISST-	GOLD	(200)

Entering actual numbers of items required, not just ticks in here will ensure you receive your order.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION BELOW.

PERSON REQUESTED BY DATE TEL.....

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED ORDER TO.....

IN EMERGENCIES ONLY, ORDERS OR ENQUIRIES CAN BE DEALT WITH ON THE SAME DAY IF A MESSAGE IS LEFT ON THE ANSWERPHONE BY 11AM (075) 3242. PLEASE OBSERVE EXPIRY DATES & DO NOT STOCKPILE.

Address and name are essential in here, not just telephone number.

NDHT Review of Contracted Services

We have recently been informed that the NDHT is reviewing the contracted services provided by Sodexo, (including courier services), because of the need for further efficiency drives and current economic constraints. A draft time schedule of potential changes to the courier service has been sent out to GPs but discussions are ongoing in relation to the following:

1. The quality/viability of samples received in the laboratories.
2. The change to laboratory workload patterns and its operational management.
3. The effect on result turnaround time.
4. Service provision to Primary Care.

To register your own comments , please e-mail:

neil.schofield@ndevon.swest.nhs.uk

or

tricia.hawson@ndevon.swest.nhs.uk

Storage of Pathology Specimens

For advice on how to store pathology specimens which cannot be delivered to the laboratory the same day they have been collected from the patient, visit the Pathology

Transfusion Competency Assessments

The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) Safer Practice Notice (SPN) No. 14 (2006) sets out the actions that Trusts must take to improve the safety of blood transfusions. This was issued jointly by the Chief Medical Officer's National Blood Transfusion Committee and Serious Hazards of Transfusion (SHOT).

One of these recommendations is that by November 2010 all staff involved with blood transfusions are required to be formally assessed against competencies relevant to their role in the transfusion process.

The Care Quality Commission will monitor Trust compliance with the NPSA SPN 14.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure they have received the relevant training, have been competency assessed and have the documented evidence. For further information contact the Hos-

pital Transfusion Team (ext. 2440) or the Transfusion Champion in your clinical area.

pital Transfusion Team (ext. 2440) or the Transfusion Champion in your clinical area.

Biochemistry Report Improvements

Dr John O'Connor, Consultant Clinical Biochemist and Mr Julian Bishop, Pathology Computer Manager have reviewed elements of the biochemistry reports. Tests have been combined onto reports, reducing the numbers of single test reports and saving paper, e.g. U/E, eGFR, LFT, Glucose and CRP are generally issued on one report instead of multiple reports previously. Only the non-Afro-Caribbean eGFR test is now reported, consistent with other labs in the south west. Finally, some general laboratory comments have been removed from reports, e.g. U/E comments about age-related reference ranges and potassium results, again in line with other labs in the south west, resulting in a clearer, more efficient way of reporting.

What do you think? Contact:

andrew.lansdell@ndevon.swest.nhs.uk

Cover Photograph

The image under the 'Testing Times' title shows a blood film from a 54 year old perimenopausal lady found to have iron deficiency anaemia. The film shows typical microcytic hypochromic red cells. This means the erythrocytes (red blood cells) are smaller and paler than usual.

Tea Break Teaser

Which of the following statements are true concerning iron deficiency anaemia?

1. Only a small amount of iron is present in the bone marrow.
2. Iron is needed for globin synthesis.
3. Iron deficiency anaemia is more common in women.
4. All patients with iron deficiency anaemia should have endoscopic examination of the upper and lower gastrointestinal tract to exclude malignancy. **Answer: page 4**



Lost or Delayed Specimens

Very occasionally, specimens are lost or delayed at some point on the way to the labs. During on-call periods, all specimens delivered to the specimen reception room by the porters are logged with patient name, date/time delivered and the name of the porter. This acts as an audit trail of specimens delivered.

Glucose Meters are Changing

(Point of Care Testing News)



Point of Care Team:
01271 349114

Please be aware from **8th March 2010** the current Roche

Glucose Meters will be replaced with the Roche Performa (shown).

To book training contact:

Learning and Development 01237 420261



Contact Details

Divisional General Manager, Diagnostics

Mr. Neil Schofield Tel: 2761 (322761)

Biochemistry Department

Dr John O'Connor, Consultant Clinical Biochemist Tel: 01392 402944
 Mr Andrew Lansdell, Principal Biochemist Tel: 2419 (322419)
 Mr. Tim Watts, General Manager Biochemistry } Tel: 3232 (370232)
 & Haematology Departments }
 General Biochemistry Laboratory Enquiries Tel 2345 (322345)

Haematology & Blood Transfusion Department

Duty Consultant Haematologist Tel: 3198 (349198)
 Mrs. Sally Williams, Haematology Secretary Tel: 3198 (349198)
 Melanie Bonnyer, Haematology CNS Tel: 3198 (349198)
 Mr. Tim Watts, General Manager Haematology } Tel: 3232 (370232)
 & Biochemistry Departments }
 Mrs. Maggi Webb, Blood Transfusion Manager Tel: 2327 (322327)
 Kathleen Wedgeworth I.V. Fluids/ Transfusion CNS Tel: 2440 (322440)
 General Haematology Laboratory Enquiries Tel 2329 (322329)
 General Transfusion Laboratory Enquiries Tel 2327 (322327)

Microbiology Department

Dr Gail Speirs, Consultant Microbiologist Tel: 2798 (322798)
 Dr David Richards, Consultant Microbiologist Tel: 2320 (322320)
 Dr Tom Lewis, Consultant Microbiologist Tel: 2384 (322384)
 Angela Mills, Microbiology Secretary Tel: 3199 (349199)
 Mr. Colin Parkin, Head Biomedical Scientist Tel: 3278 (370278)
 General Microbiology Laboratory Enquiries Tel 2347 (322347)

Cellular Pathology Department

Dr Nicolas Ward, Consultant Histopathologist Tel: 3197 (349197)
 Dr Jason Davies, Consultant Histopathologist Tel: 3197 (349197)
 Dr Andrew Bull, Consultant Histopathologist Tel: 3197 (349197)
 Miss Katie Paul, Histopathology Secretary Tel: 3197 (349197)
 Mr. Lee Luscombe, Head Biomedical Scientist Tel: 3754 (311754)
 General Cell. Path. Laboratory Enquiries Tel 2340 (322340)
 Mr. Michael Elton, Mortuary Manager Tel: 2302 (322302)
 Bereavement Support Office Tel: 2404 (322404)

Pathology Computer Manager

Mr. Julian Bishop Tel 2324 (322324)

Pathology Quality Manager

Mr. Bruce Seymour Tel 2324 (322324)

Point of Care Manager

Mr. David O'Neill Tel : 3114 (349114)

Pathology Office Manager

Mrs. Ruth Teague Tel: 2796 (322796)

Pathology Supplies/Consumables

Debbie Martinelli & Marcus Milton Tel: 2342 (322342)

N.D.D.H. Switchboard Tel 0 (322577)

Full contact details are available on the 'Contact Us' page of the Pathology Handbook on Tarkanet.

Internal telephone extensions are shown above. Numbers in brackets are the direct dial numbers from outside the hospital. Barnstaple area code is 01271.

Laboratory Opening Times

The laboratory is fully staffed from 09:00 to 17:30 Monday to Friday and on Saturday between 09:00 and 12:30 for all departments except:-

Cellular Pathology—08:30 to 17:00 Mon-Fri only

Mortuary/Bereavement—08:30 to 16:00 Mon-Fri only

Point of Care Testing—08:30 to 17:30 Mon-Fri only

Outside of these times there is an on-call service in operation for Biochemistry, Haematology, Microbiology and the Mortuary departments. Contact the on-call staff via the N.D.D.H. Switchboard on ext. 0 (or 01271 322577 externally) - see below for more details on how to contact the on-call biomedical team.

There is also a doorbell outside the main Pathology entrance .

'How do I get Clinical or General Advice 'Out of Hours?'

CLINICAL ADVICE:-

Biochemistry & Haematology & Microbiology

Clinical Advice from a Pathology Consultant can be obtained outside of normal hours by contacting the N.D.D.H. switchboard—dial 0 from inside the hospital or 01271 322577 and ask for the consultant you require.

GENERAL ADVICE

There are three on-call biomedical scientists (one each for the biochemistry, haematology and microbiology departments) .

The on-call staff request that you do not directly phone the laboratory during on-call periods as they are frequently unable to take calls due to being in other parts of the laboratory, collecting specimens for example.

However, on-call staff can be contacted as follows:

Biochemistry & Haematology: By bleep, either directly (see below), or asking switchboard to bleep the biomedical staff required.

Microbiology:

Through Switchboard only.

How To Contact a Pathology Bleep Holder

Haematology Bleep: 045

Biochemistry Bleep: 031

1. Obtain a dialing tone
2. Dial 74 and the 3 digit bleep number (above)
3. Input the extension number you wish the bleep holder to contact

4. Wait for the confirmation tone (series of long beeps) and replace/switch off the handset/phone

For example, to contact bleep 045 dial 74 045 (your ext. no.) and wait for the confirmatory tone before hanging up.

We hope that you have found this newsletter interesting and helpful. If you would like to see information on a specific topic in the next newsletter, please contact the Pathology Quality Manager, Mr. Bruce Seymour on ext. 2324 (or 01271 322324), email bruce.seymour@ndevon.swest.nhs.uk with any requests.

Answer to blood film quiz. Only 3 is correct. In iron deficiency anaemia, bone marrow stores of iron are completely depleted. Iron is needed for haem synthesis. The incidence of iron deficiency anaemia is greater in women, primarily related to menstrual blood loss and pregnancy. In young patients with a clear source of chronic blood loss e.g. a young woman with heavy menstrual periods, endoscopy is not mandatory.