**Amendment History**

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USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

For full listing see page 37

Southmead Hospital switchboard: Telephone 0117 950 5050

Maps are available:
https://www.nbt.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/map/Southmead%20Site%20Map%20from%20LGDavis%20March%202019.pdf

General Infection Sciences Enquiries 0117 4146222

This is our main automated switchboard number. Use this and then select the appropriate option.

Finalised results should be accessed in ICE, or Open ICE - please use these whenever possible. Incomplete result profiles cannot be given.

For public health advice and advice on meningitis and other infectious disease notification please call 0300 3038162

Stores/Supplies
If you wish to order laboratory consumables (specimen containers, forms swabs etc) please call

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
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<td>BRI site</td>
<td>0117 342 2573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUH Site</td>
<td>01225 82 4724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBT Site</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The Infection Sciences Bristol Laboratory is located at the North Bristol NHS trust (NBT) hospital site and the laboratory is one of the largest microbiology laboratories in the UK, providing a clinical service for the North Bristol NHS Trust, University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust, (UHBristol) the Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust (RUHT) and for the many GP practices in the Bristol and Bath areas.

The Infections Sciences laboratory has been formed from a collaboration between the Pathology services of the North Bristol NHS Trust (NBT) and Public Health England (PHE). As part of this Collaboration, NBT and PHE have agreed to provide some of these services in an integrated way. The Collaboration Agreement governs the relationship of the Parties with respect to the pathology services and the laboratory associated public health services to be provided from NBT's facilities at Southmead Hospital, Bristol, and set out how staff and resources will be pooled and configured in respect of integrated services.

The Department of Infection Sciences provides a hospital-based service for the diagnosis and clinical management of infectious diseases for patients in both hospital and the community, together with advice on the control of infection.
The laboratory is located over three different sites with the main laboratory situated at the NBT site and houses the following:

**Virology department** - providing a clinical Virology service to NBT, UHBristol, WAHT and the RUHT. The laboratory also supplies a referral service for many other hospitals across the South West. The laboratory provides both regional and national specialist tests and has an international reputation for excellence.

**Clinical Bacteriology Department** - The department accepts many hundreds of specimens daily for bacteriological investigation, and is able to offer clinical advice on all aspects of clinical Bacteriology and Parasitology, including advice on antibiotic treatment, control of infection, and emerging antibiotic-resistant organisms.

A satellite clinical Bacteriology service is situated adjacent to other disciplines within the UHBristol Laboratory Medicine Department. This provides an on site clinical support and infection control advice to the UHBristol NHS Trust.

In addition the laboratory has a small dedicated area with in the Pathology reception for the receipt and incubation of blood culture samples from the UHBristol NHS trust to facilitate time sensitive loading requirements for these samples. This service is provided by the UHBristol pathology reception staff with oversight from the Infection Sciences laboratory.

The Royal United Hospital, (RUH), Bath site houses a small satellite laboratory offering an urgent bacteriological service, processing all blood cultures and cerebrospinal fluids (CSFs) from RUH inpatients. Other urgent specimens may be processed by arrangement, but the remaining routine inpatient, outpatient and GP specimens are transported to the main Bristol laboratory regularly during the extended working day. RUH employed Microbiology Consultants are on site, who, with the other members of the team in Bath are able to offer a full clinical service, including control of infection.

A satellite laboratory is situated within the Unity Sexual Health clinic, Tower Hill, Bristol and provides near patient molecular testing for C.trachomatis and N.gonorrhoeae. This laboratory is staffed on a rotation basis by individuals from the main Virology dept and the Infection Sciences laboratory retains oversight of this service.

The PHE supports several reference laboratories nationally, one of which is part of the combined Infection Sciences Laboratory.

**Mycology Reference Laboratory** (MRL) - provides a comprehensive national service for the diagnosis and management of fungal infection, including the isolation and identification of yeasts and moulds, together with a susceptibility testing service and an anti-fungal drug assay service. It also houses the National Collection of Pathogenic Fungi (NCPF).

**Antimicrobial Reference Laboratory** (ARL) - provides a comprehensive antimicrobial assay service for the purpose of therapeutic monitoring and supporting consultative advice on the technical aspects and clinical interpretation of antimicrobial assays. The laboratory receives referred samples from all over the UK and Ireland.
The Laboratory also receives foods, waters and other environmental specimens on behalf of the **Food, Water and Environmental Laboratory** which is located at the Porton laboratory and arranges their onward transportation.

Finally, NBT also houses the administrative department and management teams, and provides the base for the laboratory transport and supplies.

The combined laboratories are well equipped to offer a comprehensive Clinical Infection Sciences service and are pleased to accept any enquiries and feedback from all who use the service.

The Infection Sciences laboratory is a UKAS accredited medical laboratory (PHE Accreditation No. 8043 & NBT accreditation No. 8099). The laboratory services have been assessed against the ISO15189 standard and the schedule of accreditation can be found via the links below:

- **NBT Microbiology**

- **PHE Public Health Laboratory**

**NORMAL HOURS OF SERVICE**

The Laboratory operates a 24/7 service on the following basis:

**North Bristol Site**
- Monday to Friday: 09:00h – 17:15h (Core hours)
- 17:15h – 09:00h (Late shift/On call)

- Saturday, Sunday & BH’s: 08.00h – 17.00h (Core hours)
- 17:00h – 08:00 (On call)

**RUH Site**
- Daily: 09:00h – 17:00h (Core hours)
- 17:00h – 09:00 (On call)

The majority of specimens arriving in the laboratory during these hours will normally be processed on the same day but a few may not be tested until the next working day. Specimens arriving outside of these times will be processed and tested on the following working day. However a proportion of specimen types for virology are batched, and may be processed with the next batch of specimens (see below for weekend and Bank Holiday working).

The laboratory can be contacted for routine enquiries during the core hours as given above, outside of these hours you should contact the oncall service to arrange out of hours testing. A general enquiries service available out of hours.

**URGENT REQUESTS**

If results are required to assist with urgent clinical decisions, contact the laboratory to arrange urgent testing if during core hours. The laboratory must be notified by telephone, even during normal working
hours as without such notification the specimen will not be prioritised and will be processed with the routine batch. Outside core working hours please contact on-call Microbiologist or Virologist, and BMS on-call via Trust switchboards. In addition please mark the request form (if used) as ‘URGENT’. This is particularly important at the RUH and UHB sites where specimens will be transported to the NBT site at routine scheduled transport times unless clearly marked as urgent and which may cause considerable delay in the availability of the result. If submitting Urgent requests to the laboratory using electronic ordering i.e. ICE, the laboratory must still be contacted and informed that the sample is being sent and urgent testing is required.

OUT-OF-HOURS SERVICES
The Bacteriology & Virology depts. offer a 24 hour 7 days a week on-call service for clinical advice and urgent specimen processing, covering all times outside of normal hours as follows:

**Bacteriology**
The laboratory offers a restricted out-of-normal hours service on both sites. A qualified, state registered Biomedical Scientist (BMS) is always ‘on-call’ to process urgent specimens and a member of the Medical Microbiology staff is always available for clinical advice.

Contact details:
- **On-call BMS**
  - Bacteriology, NBT site – via the NBT switchboard Tel No: 0117 950 5050
  - Bacteriology, RUH site – via the RUH switchboard Tel No: 01225 428 331
- **Medical Microbiologist (including infection control)**
  - Bacteriology, BRI site – via the BRI switchboard Tel No: 0117 923 0000
  - Bacteriology, NBT site – via the NBT switchboard Tel No: 0117 950 5050
  - Bacteriology, RUH site – via the RUH switchboard Tel No: 01225 428 331

It is the responsibility of the requesting doctor to contact the on-call BMS to process urgent specimens outside normal working hours.

**Virology**
The Consultants currently receive all out-of-hours requests prior to testing and will advise on test selection, give appropriate clinical advice and liaise with the duty biomedical scientist on call. This service is currently under review and it is anticipated that from the 1st April 2019 out of hours calls will be directed by switchboard to either the on call BMS or the clinical virologist on call depending on the enquiry.

The Clinical Virologist can be contacted via the NBT Switchboard on 0117 950 5050. Requests should be made by medical staff or senior nursing staff. Please note that many tests undertaken during normal working hours are available outside of core laboratory hours (on-call, or at weekends).

**Duty Incident management**
The laboratory provide an out of hours rota so that a member of the Infection Sciences management team can be contacted in the event of a significant service delivery issue not relating to urgent testing requirements. This may include but no be limited to issues with estates and accommodation issues or national outbreaks or incidents that require local management coordination.
Contact the on-call duty incident manager via the NBT switchboard.

Public Holiday Arrangements
A small team of staff will work in the Bacteriology and Virology laboratories to read cultures, carry out certain molecular tests etc, from the day before. They are not available for routine work or enquiries but will provide an on-call service for urgent requests only. Please contact the Bacteriology department via NBT/RUH Switchboard as above and Virology on call Consultants via the NBT switchboard.

Please note that out of hours service is not routinely available for the MRL or ARL.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION – GENERAL GUIDELINES

Consent for testing
The laboratory does not seek to confirm that informed consent has been obtained for any specimen that is sent for analysis. It is the responsibility of referring clinicians to ensure appropriate consent has been obtained. Requesting a specific test implies patient consent has been obtained. Where this is impossible, testing should only take place when it is in the best interests of the patient. The General Medical Council provides guidance which should be consulted on this issue. Under normal circumstances, the laboratory does not require separate consent documentation to be sent with the request form. Where appropriate, this should be documented in the patient notes. The laboratory may perform additional tests that were not originally requested when such tests are necessary to confirm results from a requested test, or to clarify a result from a requested test- an example of this would be hepatitis C RNA testing of a hepatitis C antibody positive sample. There is the potential to request further tests on a specimen already received in the laboratory. These tests can be requested by telephoning the laboratory, but in certain circumstances written confirmation may be required. Service users should note that samples are only kept for limited times

Specimens are often received with insufficient or very brief details of a clinical condition (e.g. rash) associated with imprecise requests (e.g. viral screen). In this setting, further information may be sought before tests are selected, or the laboratory staff may select a limited range of tests.

The advice on the collection of specific common specimens is not intended to be exhaustive. Some patients who are infected or colonised with certain infectious agents require special precautions when taking specimens and for their transport.

Further information – patient specimen collection
Guidance on specimen collection and additional information on laboratory tests can be found through the links below;

- https://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/pathology/Pages/pathology-services-explained.aspx
- https://labtestsonline.org.uk/

Patients may be required to collect samples in their own homes depending on the sample type e.g. urine, faeces or specimen time e.g. EMU. Information relating to this can be found on the link below:

- https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/

and specifically:
Sample integrity
Specimens submitted for certain laboratory procedures should be transported to the laboratory as soon as possible or according to transport requirements as indicated in Appendix 1. Special requirements may include specific temperature e.g. transport on ice, sample separation prior to transport e.g. EDTA samples for quantitative analysis for viral load, specific transport medium e.g. VTM. Samples which have specific transport requirements may not be tested if received in the laboratory having been transported inappropriately. Please contact the laboratory if further advice is required.

Specimens should be transported to the laboratory as promptly as possible. Specimens, particularly blood, should be obtained in strict accordance with guidelines to prevent needlestick injuries. Specimens should be collected using strict aseptic technique in order to minimise contamination by indigenous flora. Samples requiring collection at a specific time (e.g. Antimicrobial assays) or conditions (Fever for Blood Cultures) should be collected by the medical staff.

Reference and adherence to the following guidelines on the control of clinical material is complied with:


Protecting Personal Information.
North Bristol Trust and Public Health England has a legal obligation to comply with all appropriate legislation in respect of data, information and IT Security. Both organisations also have a duty to comply with guidance issued by the Department of Health and Social Care, the NHS Executive, other advisory groups to the NHS guidance issued by professional bodies.

REQUESTING OF LABORATORY TESTS

Electronic Requesting (ICE requests)
Where this is available please use whenever possible as it enables more rapid receipt and processing within the laboratories. All infection sciences requests are available on the electronic patient record (ICE). Please answer all questions and include RELEVANT clinical details. If there is a history of a particular risk e.g. recent travel to a area of risk this must be included. Please ensure that details of risk is included on all requests irrespective of test requested as this information is essential to ensure that the correct laboratory precautions are taken when processing all samples, e.g. risk of a particular viral pathogen associated with travel should also be included in bacteriology requests details.

It is important to ensure that the correct ICE (barcoded) number is attached to the correct specimen before placing inside the specimen bag.

Please ensure that you order the correct test(s) and select the correct specimen type as failure to do this may lead to incorrect testing or a delay in result. The ICE requesting system will show those tests...
most commonly requested for Microbiology, should the test you require not be visible please contact the laboratory to check that the test is available. Some tests are embedded within clinical syndromic profiles (e.g. rash contact), please also check these if a test is not individually listed.

It is extremely important to include clinical details when sending specimens for microbiology to ensure correct processing and interpretation of results. This information is the same as that currently required on handwritten request forms and should include clinical details and symptoms as well as information on antibiotic use (dosage information e.g. pre/post), foreign travel, outbreaks, date of onset etc.

**Request forms**
The majority of requests from the Bristol and Bath area will be made through the local electronic ordering system. These requests are then activated once the specimen has been received in the laboratory. If electronic requesting is not possible then a request can be made by completing the relevant request form available from your local trust. Please see below for minimum data required for these types of requests.

For samples referred to the laboratory for specialist tests referral request forms can be obtained on request as below:

Antimicrobial reference laboratory – ISQuality@nbt.nhs.uk
Virology specialist services – ISQuality@nbt.nhs.uk

The referral request forms have been designed so that the appropriate test can be indicated and associated information is provided when sending samples to the laboratory. Please ensure that referral request forms are used, photocopies of original forms or samples submitted on multi-forms may result in the incorrect tests performed or required tests may be missed.

**Completion of Request Forms**
Poor or illegible handwriting may be misinterpreted and result in report delay or incorrect test selection. Please help to minimise this by completing all sections of the appropriate request form using a ballpoint pen. It is important to fill in the relevant request box by placing the ‘X’ accurately within the box. This will facilitate the requesting process and improve speed of booking the patient onto the laboratory system.

Printed patient addressograph labels are preferable to minimise error. Where addressograph labels are used, please ensure that the current Consultant and Location of the patient are added if these details are not on the label attached. Failure to do so may result in a delay of results as details are required for the delivery of hard copy reports.

It is **essential** that a summary of the relevant clinical details and therapy (if relevant) is included, for correct laboratory processing of the specimen and interpretation of results. It is important that a minimum data set is available to ensure that results are assigned to the correct patient and returned to the correct clinician. Please provide the name and contact details of the requesting healthcare worker or telephoning of important results may be significantly delayed or impossible.
Provide a separate request form for each specimen. All investigations must be authorised.

**Please include the following information on the request form:**

PLEASE NOTE: One other unique parameter i.e. NHS or Hospital No or date of birth is required in addition to patient first name and surname to ensure that the request is matched to the correct patient record on the laboratory database. For requests from patients submitted under unique coded identifiers e.g. GUM Numbers, the number and date of birth is required.

Failure to provide sufficient patient identifiers on the request form may result in the rejection of the request or a delay in processing of the sample.

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Hospital number (if available)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of birth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surname (or unique coded identifier)</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First name(s):</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First line of patient address &amp; postcode:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward or location:</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP code/Consultant in charge:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bleep or contact number of the staff requesting the test:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address for report: if different from location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specimen type:</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test(s) requested:</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date and time of sampling:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infection Risk status (Essential if applicable):</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional information in clinical details should include (Essential):</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Details of foreign travel, occupation (where relevant), contact with infectious diseases</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Additional details of sampling sites if relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Details of recent, current and intended antimicrobial therapy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Date of contact, date of onset and duration of illness (essential for serology)</td>
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Other relevant clinical information including immune status of patient if known. Please ensure that details of risk is included on all requests irrespective of test requested as this information is essential to ensure that the correct laboratory precautions are taken when processing all samples, e.g. risk of a particular viral pathogen associated with travel should also be included in bacteriology requests details.

Failure to complete forms correctly results in delay and inefficiency. Reports often fail to reach the correct location because of incorrect ward, consultant or GP codes.

**Labelling of Specimens**

It is essential that all specimens are carefully labelled and dated to ensure that the correct analysis is attributed to the correct patient. Specimens requested on ICE **MUST** be labelled with the ICE generated label. Non-ICE specimens should be labelled with the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Essential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NHS number or Hospital Number (if available) or Date of birth</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surname (please PRINT) or unique coded identifier</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Forename (Essential)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Date of specimen
Site of sampling / specimen type
If unsure about the availability or value of any test, please contact the laboratory prior to taking a specimen.

Failure to comply with these guidelines may lead to the rejection of the sample. Specimens should be placed in appropriate containers and it is especially important that those containing pus, fluids or blood should be shut tight as leakage in transit may result in the sample being discarded or may make analysis difficult or invalid and pose an obvious hazard to others

REJECTION POLICY

Incorrectly/Unlabelled specimens
The laboratory regularly receives specimens that are unlabelled or incorrectly labelled (patient name/dob on specimen differs from that on form or electronic request). We are unable to process these specimens and they will generally be rejected. Any such specimens which are difficult to repeat (CSFs, tissues etc) or cannot be repeated (pre dose treatment measurements, post mortem samples) will be subject to discussion between the relevant depts. clinician on duty and the requesting Clinician. However, these specimens will only be processed in exceptional circumstances and a comment should be added to the report to alert the requestor to the laboratory concerns relating to the identity of sample and thus the reliability of the results in relation to patient management.

Incorrect sample type
Where inappropriate specimens are submitted for tests requested a report will be issued requesting submission of the correct sample.

These specimens will not normally be processed and will generally be rejected. Any such specimen that is difficult to repeat (as above) will be subject to discussion between the relevant depts. clinician on duty and the requesting Clinician. Other specimens may be rejected see section on relevant specimen types.

Other specimens that are unsuitable for microbiological examination include the following:
- unlabelled or improperly labelled specimens
- specimens received in leaking, cracked or broken containers
- specimens received in containers, the external aspects of which are contaminated
- unpreserved specimens received more than 12 hours after being collected

Specimens should be transported in sterile containers. If transport is to be significantly delayed, a suitable transport medium/device should be used or the specimen refrigerated in order to optimise testing; specimens that should not be refrigerated include blood cultures, CSF and those that might contain Neisseria spp. (Genital or Throat swabs) or Haemophilus influenzae.

High risk specimens
Although a 'Universal Precautions' policy is adopted in the laboratory, specimens taken from patients known or suspected to present a health hazard to laboratory staff eg TB, typhoid and paratyphoid, brucellosis, should be clearly labelled “DANGER OF INFECTION” on both the form and specimen. This is especially important when sending specimens of tissue, blood or other body fluids. This
requirement enables the laboratory staff to implement immediate, appropriate prophylaxis and advice should an accident occur.

Certain organisms are classified as being serious biohazards. Information can be found at http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/misc208.pdf. They require specialist laboratories designed for containment during manipulation of specimens and cultures.

Specimens should NOT be taken or sent to the laboratory from patients suspected as having the diseases which fall into the following categories without consulting the Medical Microbiologist/Virologist.

- Hazard group 3 (e.g. rabies, Avian Influenza)
- Hazard group 4 pathogens (e.g. viral haemorrhagic fevers)

Please note: this list is not exhaustive, if there is any suspicion of a high risk atypical organism please contact the laboratory to discuss.

Where such specimens are submitted to the laboratory please ensure that the request form is clearly labelled with ‘DANGER OF INFECTION’ and use unambiguous and commonly recognised terminology. Failure to do this may result in specimen delay, inappropriate testing and risk to laboratory staff.

Samples from patients receiving radioactive isotopes
Should there be a requirement to submit a sample for testing from a patient who has undergone radioactive therapy; the laboratory MUST be contacted BEFORE sending the sample to discuss risk associated with particular sample type.

MEDICO – LEGAL SPECIMENS
Any specimens submitted for medico – legal purposes should have documentation accompanying these specimens to provide an unbroken chain of evidence. Please note that the laboratory is not a forensic laboratory and provides a testing service for these specimens.

The Bristol Infection Sciences Laboratory medico-legal procedure and Chain of Evidence form are based on recommendations from the Royal College of Pathologists and may be requested from the laboratory. Please ensure that the box relating to consent for the storage of samples post processing by the laboratory has been completed appropriately.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE HUMAN TISSUE ACT

Submitting tissue samples from deceased patients
The Bristol Infectious Sciences Laboratory is not licensed by the Human Tissue Authority (HTA) to store tissues from deceased patients. Post mortem samples are submitted to the laboratory by coroners or pathologists for examination to help them determine the cause of death.

Obtaining consent to remove, store and use human tissues for a scheduled purpose is one of the underlying principles of the Human Tissue Act. Unless the laboratory is informed that consent has been obtained or the coroner has requested that samples are retained for further testing, residual
sample will be disposed of or returned (when requested on at time of receipt) on completion of testing and after the final report has been issued.

TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS
All specimens should be transported to the laboratory as rapidly as possible after collection to avoid compromising results. Specimens may be transported via normal portering rounds/transport arrangements during the normal working day. When virology, bacteriology and/or mycology tests are to be performed, on the same specimen, a separate specimen for each laboratory is preferred to ensure timely receipt and processing in each laboratory. Virology specimens taken out of hours should be discussed with the Duty Virologist before dispatch to the laboratory. Non-urgent specimens collected outside routine laboratory working hours may be stored overnight in the refrigerator, with the exception of blood cultures. **Blood cultures should never be refrigerated** but sent directly to the site specific laboratory reception.

Blood cultures
Blood culture samples submitted for incubation are now received and incubated on site for all 3 laboratory locations.

- **RUH**
  Blood culture bottles are received and loaded up until 22:00 by the Infection Sciences staff on an instrument located within the RUH Pathology in the hot lab.

- **NBT**
  Blood cultures taken within wards on the NBT hospital site are received and loaded up until 22:00hrs by the Infection Sciences staff onto instrumentation located within the main NBT Infection Sciences laboratory

- **UHBristol**
  Blood cultures taken within the UHBristol hospital are received and loaded onto instrumentation located within the UHBristol Pathology specimen reception.

**NBT**
Samples from the NBT hospital site can be transported via the pneumatic tube system (see below) or by regular porter collections.

**UHBristol**
Transport from within the UHBristol is provided by porters who undertake several ward and department collections throughout the day. There are also regular deliveries from all UHBristol hospital sites direct to laboratory medicine at UHBristol. The UHBristol pneumatic tube system may also be used where appropriate (see below). Specimens are transported to the NBT site via regular courier transport runs from the UHBristol site. Urgent specimens out of hours should not be sent before agreement with the laboratory on-call staff and should be dispatched to UHBristol Pathology reception immediately if agreed. An urgent courier will be arranged by on-call staff.

**GP Practices**
Regular van collections are scheduled for all GP Practices during the working week, using pre-arrange couriers (City sprint). Surgeries should place specimens in an individual specimen container inside a sealed specimen bag. This should then be placed in a large sealable specimen bag along with other specimens destined for the same pathology laboratory with sufficient tissue to absorb the
contents. Specimens waiting collection should be held in a secure area of the premises until collected by the driver.

The driver will transport specimens from the surgery to the van and place the bag of specimens in the appropriate plastic box fitted in the van, securing the lid. The plastic boxes in the van will be padded with cushioning and absorbent material and be labelled appropriately with the transport mark. The driver will then carry the boxes to the appropriate pathology reception where they will be emptied, and take the empty transport boxes back to the van.

In the event of an accident or spillage away from the Trust follow instructions with the spill kit on each van.

Specimens sent by post should be sent in accordance with the relevant Transport Regulations, a copy of which is available from the laboratory on request.

Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust

Internal transport of samples at the Bath site is under RUH Trust management. This consists of regular RUH portering rounds and van transport between GP practices. Urgent transport of samples on site is undertaken by RUH portering staff. Regular transport of specimens from Bath RUH pathology reception to NBT is undertaken by couriers. Departure times from Bath are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mondays to Friday</th>
<th>Collection time from Bath</th>
<th>Arrival time at Bristol</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0900h</td>
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<td>1700h</td>
<td>1800h</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekends (Sat and Sun/Bank holidays)</td>
<td>0915h – 0930h</td>
<td>1000h – 1030h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Samples which are received in the RUH Pathology department after the stated times will be sent on the next available transport. However, samples received after 1700h will not be transported to the Bristol NBT laboratory until the following day on the 0900h transport.

Some urgent specimens may need to be sent to the Bristol laboratory for processing out of hours or at weekends e.g. BAL specimens. Packaging and transport of these specimens should be arranged through the on call BMS via the RUH switchboard. Clinical discussion about the patient with the Consultant Medical Microbiologist on call may also be helpful.

Use of the pneumatic tube system

The UHBristol and the NBT site each have a pneumatic tube system. These are connected to the respective pathology dept. on each site. All appropriately packed, urgent specimens for Microbiology may be sent via NBT pneumatic tube if on the NBT site with exception to the following:

- Samples with a volume of more than 50mL
- Samples requiring containment level 3 e.g. Mycobacterium investigation
- Samples from patients which have a potential hazard group 4 risk e.g. viral haemorrhagic fever
- Samples sent in glass specimen containers
Ensure that specimens are taken into the appropriate leak-proof specimen container or tube and sealed in either a bag/form combination or in a polythene specimen transport bag accompanied by a completed request form in a separate pocket of the transport bag or a clearly visible ICE label on the specimen. Place the specimen, sealed in a bag as described above, in an appropriate ‘pod’ and ensure that the specimen is surrounded by sufficient hand towel or other absorbent ‘wadding’ to help prevent breakage and absorb spillages.

RESULT ENQUIRIES

Computer Accessing of Results
All completed results are available on the computer system. Results should be accessible for all NHS users (or users with an N3 email) via ICE or open ICE depending on location and is the recommended method of accessing all patient results. Accessing results in this way is quicker, more secure and accurate and ultimately faster than telephoning the laboratory.

Certain results are routinely communicated to the clinician by telephone, fax or in person by the clinical staff. This will be determined by the result in combination with the clinical details provided.

Clinicians having specific concerns about patients are encouraged to contact the Department to obtain advice about their investigation and further management. Early consultation about patients may result in more rapid analysis of specimens with results being available more quickly to the clinician as well as providing direction on antimicrobial and other management. Similarly those in doubt about appropriate infection control procedures are encouraged to contact either an infection control nurse or medical microbiologist for the relevant trust.

If the result is not yet visible and the result is still required urgently for clinical management of the patient then please telephone the laboratory. Incomplete results will not be communicated as such results, or the interpretation of them may change under exceptional circumstances.

Results will not be given by telephone directly to the patient named on the request form, regardless of whether he or she is a member of the healthcare staff. It is particularly important to note that results required by occupational health that may impact on fitness to practice, for example hepatitis B serology, can only be requested by, and returned to, that department.

In order to protect patient confidentiality, results can only be given to members of the patient’s healthcare team (this comprises the people providing clinical services for the patient and the administrative staff who directly support those services)

Staff should not send self-referred specimens; all specimens should be submitted from either a GP, occupational health, or other hospital department or staff.

Laboratory Fax policy
It is laboratory policy not to fax results outside of exceptional, pre-agreed arrangements. Where a pre-agreed criteria has been set up the laboratory is only able to send e-faxes to secure locations.
Telephone enquiries
Please restrict these as far as possible for results that are not yet available on the hospital computer or for those requiring clinical discussion. Refer to Turnaround Time (TAT) guidelines given on Appendix 2

Results from Urgent Requests
Results from urgent bacteriology specimens sent from outside the 3 Trusts (NBT/UHBristol / RUHT) will be telephoned as soon as they are available.

Results from within the NBT/UHBristol / RUHT will be accessible on the computer as soon as they are complete. Please note that urgent virology results may not be available on the computer until the next working day, but significant results will be telephoned. Please restrict telephone enquiries to those requiring clinical discussion

Clinical Enquiries and advice
Clinical advice is available from the medical virologists and microbiologists and senior clinical scientific staff throughout normal working hours using the departmental numbers listed in Appendix 2. Information on specimen collection and test selection can be found in Appendix 2.

Out of hours clinical advice may be accessed via NBT/UHB/ RUH switchboard and asking for the on-call medical microbiologist/virologist.

Additional Tests
Occasionally additional tests may be required by the requestor on samples already submitted to the laboratory. If additional tests are required please contact the laboratory to discuss.

Additional tests should be requested as soon as possible after the initial request as retention times vary depending on sample type. Samples requiring additional investigations will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending upon specimen type and investigation requested.

Uncertainty of Measurement/Result
Any test/procedure performed in the laboratory may be subject to a variety of factors that may influence the outcome of the test. These may occur at one of 3 stages;

- Pre-examination
- Examination stage
- Post-examination

By recognising those factors which could adversely influence the outcome of the test e.g. transport, correct specimen requirements, storage conditions pre-testing etc and implementing control measure to reduce or remove them the outcome can be relied on to be accurate and hence provide assurance to service users of the quality of the results produced by the laboratory.

In addition there can be a level of variability associated with quantitative results that the laboratory can calculate and monitors to provide continuous information on the performance of procedures, details of which can be provided on request. Please contact the Quality manager (Elisabeth.North@nbt.nhs.uk) if you would like further information.
Complaints Procedure
The laboratory is committed to providing a high quality service to all service users however it understands that aspects of the service may not meet the requirements of the customer at all times, should this occur and there be a requirement to make a complaint to the laboratory please submit this in writing to one of the following:

- Dr Kim Jacobson – Infection Sciences Clinical Lead
- Mr Jonathan Steer – Infection Sciences Service Manager
- Mrs Elisabeth North – Quality Manager

To raise a concern or complaint with the laboratory service the following email can be used to contact the quality team; ISQuality@nbt.nhs.uk
REPERTOIRE OF TESTS / SERVICES

Whilst most commonly requested tests are undertaken within this laboratory some are referred to specialist reference laboratories. The list below, although not exhaustive, gives an indication of this laboratory’s repertoire

BACTERIOLOGY

North Bristol Hospital site
- Clinical advice / Infection Control
- Routine bacteriological examination (microscopy and culture) of the following clinical specimens:
  - Blood cultures
  - Bronchoalveolar lavage/washings
  - Cerebrospinal Fluid
  - Faeces
  - Fluids, aspirates, pus and swabs from all sites
  - Genital specimens
  - Ocular specimens
  - Sputum
  - Urine
- Routine microscopy for mycobacteria and culture of all clinical specimens except blood cultures
- Routine mycological examination (microscopy and culture) of the following clinical specimens:
  - Skin
  - Hair
  - Nails
- *Helicobacter pylori* faecal antigen
- *Clostridium difficile* toxin
- Cross Infection Screening
- Susceptibility testing
- Sterility checking (Pharmacy)

Royal United Hospital, Bath Site
The satellite laboratory at the RUH performs a restricted range of tests on-site. The majority of specimens are transferred to NBT for processing. The on-site repertoire includes:

- Clinical advice / Infection Control
- Routine bacteriological examination (microscopy and culture) of the following clinical specimens:
  - Blood culture
  - Cerebrospinal Fluid
  - Susceptibility testing
  - Urgent specimens (all except faeces, sputa or other Containment level 3 categorisation)

United Bristol NHS Trust site
- Clinical advice / Infection Control
- Receipt and incubation of blood cultures (samples which flag as positive are sent to the main laboratory (NBT site for further investigation)
- Rapid Influenza and RSV molecular testing for UHBristol hospital locations only
MYCOLOGY Reference Laboratory
The Mycology Reference Laboratory (MRL) provides a comprehensive service for the diagnosis and management of fungal infections through the provision of specialist laboratory services and expert clinical and technical advice.

A user manual is available for the services offered by the Mycology Reference Laboratory and is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mycology-reference-laboratory-mrl-service-user-handbook

ANTI-MICROBIAL Reference Laboratory
The Anti-microbial reference laboratory (ARL) provides a comprehensive service for therapeutic drug monitoring through the provision of specialist laboratory and clinical services.

A user manual is available detailing services at the link below; http://www.bcare.nbt.nhs.uk/services/clinical-antimicrobial-assays

VIROLOGY

North Bristol Hospital site
- Clinical advice / Infection Control
- Bronchoalveolar lavage/washings and sputum for Direct Immunofluorescence (IF) for Pneumocystis jiroveci
- Legionella pneumophila: urinary antigen
- Streptococcus pneumoniae: urinary antigen
- Nucleic acid amplification tests (NAAT) for the following
  - Respiratory viruses (Influenza A and B, RSV, human metapneumovirus, adenovirus, parainfluenza viruses 1,2,3, Rhinovirus)
  - Chlamydia trachomatis
  - Neisseria gonorrhoeae
  - CMV (quantitative/qualitative)
  - HSV 1 and 2
  - Hepatitis C (qualitative and quantitative, optional genotyping)
  - Hepatitis B (quantitative)
  - Parvovirus
  - HIV (quantitative)
  - Adenovirus (quantitative/qualitative)
  - BK virus (quantitative)
  - Enterovirus
  - VZV
  - EBV (quantitative)
  - Gastroenteritis viruses- norovirus, adenovirus, rotavirus, astrovirus and sapovirus
  - HHV6
  - Measles
  - Pertussis
- Susceptibility/resistance testing to oseltamivir (Pandemic vH1N1 2009 influenza only)
- Serological tests for the following:
– Adenovirus
– Anti-DNAse B, Antistreptolysin (ASO)
– Borrelia burgdorferi (Lyme)
– Brucella
– Chlamydia trachomatis,
– Chlamydia psittaci,
– Chlamydia pneumoniae
– Coxiella burneti (Q Fever)
– Cytomegalovirus
– Epstein Barr Virus (EBV)
– Hepatitis A, B, C, and E
– Herpes simplex virus
– HIV 1 and 2 antigen/antibody and antibody only
– HTLV 1 and 2 antibody assay
– Influenza A and B
– Measles virus
– Mumps
– Mycoplasma pneumoniae
– Parvovirus
– Pertussis
– RSV
– Rubella
– Syphilis
– Toxoplasma
– Varicella zoster

United Bristol NHS Trust – Unity Sexual Health clinic

• Nucleic acid amplification tests (NAAT) for the following
  – Chlamydia trachomatis
  – Neisseria gonorrhoeae
  – Trichomonas vaginalis
COLLECTION OF SPECIMENS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS
Where both Virology, Mycology and Bacteriology testing is required it is advisable to send separate sample to each laboratory.

Laboratory Turn Around Times (LTT)
Laboratory Turnaround Time is monitored from the time of receipt of the specimen into the laboratory LIMS to the results being available electronically. It does not include transport time from the requestor or postal time for a hard copy report. The expected turn around time for tests where no available coding is indicated will depend on the test requested.

Please note that turnaround times are influenced by the type of specimen, investigation and the need for further / confirmatory tests, as well as the transport arrangements between the laboratory and the requesting hospital or practice.

BACTERIOLOGY
The final identification and susceptibility testing of some organisms can take several days and may even need referral to a reference laboratory. In this situation, preliminary results will be issued as soon as practicable.

Inappropriate specimens include the following:
- sinus tract specimens from patients with suspected osteomyelitis
- surface swabs from diabetic or decubitus ulcers that do not look infected
- routine catheter specimens of urine i.e. in the absence of signs or symptoms of infection
- nasal swabs from patients with suspected sinusitis
- high vaginal swabs from patients with suspected pelvic inflammatory disease, but with no vaginal discharge or other evidence of infection on examination
- Urine catheter tips

Sufficient material should be provided for culture and all of the other tests required. Whenever possible, tissue, fluid or pus, as opposed to swabs, should be provided.

Culture results
Bacterial culture results may be reported semi-quantitatively i.e. scanty, moderate, heavy etc however this nomenculture is not an indication of severity of infection and appropriate advisory comments will be included on the final report.

Blood cultures
Blood cultures are used to detect the cause of an infection leading to bacteraemia or fungaemia. The results are important because they help guide appropriate treatment. It is generally not recommended that general practitioners take blood culture samples as patients who require a blood culture usually require hospital care and the delay in incubation of the bottles may compromise results.

The blood culture status is continually monitored by the laboratory, and the sample is usually incubated for 5 days. All blood cultures are treated as urgent specimens so the laboratory does not need advance notification of them being taken. However if there is of increase risk e.g. due to details of foreign travel, suspected enteric fever, or brucellosis, the laboratory should be notified in advance of any high risk blood culture being sent.
Results of all significant positive blood cultures will be telephoned to a clinician as soon as they become positive. As the isolation time depends upon the organism and the initial inoculum, this may vary from a few hours, up to five days after receipt.

Blood cultures should only be taken when there is a reason to suspect infection. They should not be taken for routine assessment. Reasons to suspect an infection and consider taking blood cultures include, but are not limited to:

- The core temperature is outside of the normal range - less than 36°C and more than 37.8°C.
- Tachycardia – HR ≥ 90 beats per minute
- Breathlessness or tachypnoea - ≥ 20 breaths per minute
- Chills or rigors.
- Development of unexplained confusion.
- The presence of focal signs of infection.
- The white blood cell count is outside of the normal range.

Additional Paediatric Indications

- Toxic appearance, including lethargy
- A drop in the Glasgow Coma Score
- Increase capillary refill time
- Increased pulse and respiratory rates
- Thrombocytopenia in neonates

Not all patients with the above symptoms will require blood cultures (e.g. a low grade fever within 24 hours of surgery is non-specific and is unlikely to represent a bacteraemia). Conversely, this list is not exclusive and blood cultures may be required in some patients who do not have any of the above symptoms. In the very young, immunocompromised, or the elderly, signs of infection may be absent or minimal. Clinical judgement is required to decide when there is a reasonable possibility that a patient has an infection where blood cultures may be useful.

**Ordering**

Blood culture sets may be ordered from the laboratory. The standard blood culture set consists of two bottles (one aerobic and one anaerobic). A single paediatric bottle is available for neonates and infants. Special blood culture collection sets are available to facilitate the safe taking of blood cultures using a butterfly collection set (see bottle set insert for details).

**Volume of blood per bottle**

The ability of a blood cultures to detect a bacteraemia or fungaemia increases with the volume of blood submitted; a blood culture set containing only half their recommended volume of blood) will miss approx ¼ of the bacteraemias that would be detected by a proper filling. The bottles indicate the required fill volumes.

**Number of blood culture sets per septic presentation**

Data shows that the percentage of diagnosed bacteraemia increases where more than one set of blood culture bottles are submitted. If sepsis persists for > 48 hrs without a diagnosis then a discussion with a medical microbiologist and further blood cultures may be indicated.
Timing and site of blood cultures

Submitting blood cultures taken from separate sites helps with interpretation of the significance of positive cultures. Blood culture sets should be taken before starting antibiotics. Blood cultures should be collected peripherally unless line-associated infection is suspected, in which case blood cultures from both peripheral and line should be collected. The blood culture sets do not have to be taken at different times. Blood cultures must not be taken from existing central or peripheral venous cannula. The only exception to this is if it is believed that a central line may be the source of bacteraemia. It is then appropriate to take blood from both the central line and from the peripheral vein. The peripheral vein sample should be collected first. Blood cultures must only be taken from a central line if blood cannot be obtained from a peripheral vein or when a line sepsis is suspected.

Aseptic technique

Approximately 1/4 of positive blood cultures are due to skin organisms, many of which are likely to be considered as contaminants. This can have significant consequences for your patient, in terms of unnecessary antibiotics and repeat cultures. Careful aseptic technique is mandatory. Blood cultures must be taken using a new venepuncture site.

a. Disinfect the skin carefully at the venepuncture site using a chlorhexidine/alcohol wipe and allow to dry before piercing the skin. If the patient has intolerance to chlorhexidine. Povidone Iodine 10% must be used as an alternative if the patient is sensitive to Chlorhexidine.

b. If blood is also being taken for other tests (e.g. biochemistry and haematology), the blood culture bottle must be filled before the other bottles to reduce the risk of contamination.

c. When using the two bottle set and the butterfly and adapter cap system the aerobic bottle should be filled first to avoid the air in the butterfly tubing entering the anaerobic bottle.

d. Remove the plastic caps from the culture bottles, wipe the rubber diaphragms with the chlorhexidine/alcohol wipe provided, allow to dry and inoculate 10ml into each bottle.

e. For paediatric bottles, add as much blood as possible up to a maximum of 4ml

f. Put the bottles in the plastic specimen bag and complete the request form or ICE request giving relevant clinical details. Please give details of other clinical symptoms or underlying disease and treatment given or anticipated.

g. Label each bottle with patient addressograph or ICE generated label PLUS add the actual date and time of collection and indicate if taken from a line (be specific about which line)

h. Blood cultures must be sent to the laboratory as soon as possible for incubation. They should NEVER be refrigerated

Contamination

Micro-organisms are present on the skin surface of patients, staff and the immediate patient environment which can result in contamination of blood cultures. Contamination can cause confusion and potentially, inappropriate treatment because it is sometimes difficult to determine if a positive blood culture is due to genuine bacteraemia or if it is a false positive result caused by contamination. Contaminated blood cultures also affect mandatory surveillance data. It is important to take blood cultures correctly in order to minimise the risk of contamination occurring.

Contamination leading to false positive result is defined as growth of bacteria in the blood culture bottle that were not present in the patient’s bloodstream and were introduced during sample collection. This contamination can come from a number of sources:
- The patient’s skin
- The equipment used to take the sample and transfer it to the culture bottle
- The hands of the person taking the blood sample
- The general environment
- Repeated opening and accessing of a central line has a high risk of introducing infection to the patient. There is also a higher contamination rate, and a positive culture from a line may not represent true bloodstream infection, but line colonisation.
- Blood cultures should not be taken from veins which are immediately proximal to existing venous cannula.
- Blood cultures should not be taken from the femoral vein as it is very difficult to disinfect the skin adequately, so there is a high risk of contamination.

**Sending blood cultures to the laboratory**
Mix the bottles and ensure they are correctly labelled; differentiate sets by labelling A&B, peripheral or central etc. It is important that the ICE label is placed down the sample tube (a good place is in the white space provided, and not over the bottle bar code) does not overlap the bottom rim and that bottles are transported to the laboratory in plastic transport bags provided. If this is not possible they should be kept at room temperature. Do NOT refrigerate.

**Clostridium difficile**
There is evidence from several studies that diarrhoea developing in patients who have been in hospital for at least 3 days, is rarely caused by an enteric pathogen (i.e., salmonella, shigella, campylobacter or Escherichia coli O157), the main exception being outbreak scenarios. C. difficile or other antibiotic associated causes of diarrhoea are much more likely. Please do not send faeces for MC&S as well as for C. difficile unless the patient fits into one of the following categories:

- in-patients suffering diarrhoea within three days of admission
- patients with suspected non-diarrhoeal manifestations of enteric infections
- adults with nosocomial diarrhoea if any of the following are applicable:
  - aged 65 or more
  - patients who are HIV positive
  - patients with neutropaenia
  - suspected nosocomial outbreak

Specimens from community patients are normally only tested for MC&S for enteric pathogens. However, those with the following criteria will also be tested for C. difficile:

- all aged 65 years or over
- recent hospitalization in those aged ≥ 2yrs
- recent antibiotic use in those aged ≥ 2yrs
- care / residential home outbreak

These details must be clearly stated on the request or testing or C. difficile may not be performed.

For diarrhoeal stool specimens from patients between 2yrs and 64 yrs CDT testing will be performed when:

- They are hospital in-patients.
- They have a history of antibiotic use within the previous 6 weeks.
- Patients from any source with a history of antibiotic exposure
- Nursing home resident

**Ova cysts and parasites**

Routine screening for *Cryptosporidium sp* and *Giardia sp* is undertaken on all specimens received. There is no need to request this as a separate OC&P investigation. Two spatula-sized portions are all that is required for analysis and containers should not be filled more, unless the faeces is liquid when the pot should be filled to one-third full. If there is going to be a delay in transport of more than 3-4 hours the specimen should be refrigerated.

For patients with relevant travel or clinical history at least 3 specimens of faeces, passed at different times, should be sent for parasitology giving relevant clinical details.

**Threadworm**

“Saline wash” specimens are used in the diagnosis of threadworm. A kit and instructions on its use are obtainable from Microbiology.

**Faeces**

The microbiological examination of faeces is complex and requires a full clinical history including the possibility of food poisoning, foreign travel with the countries visited and the dates, and antimicrobial therapy, as well as the more basic information. Failure to give this information may mean important pathogens are not isolated. 3-5ml of stool is required for analysis and containers should not be filled more, unless the faeces is liquid when the pot should be filled to one-third full. If there is going to be a delay in transport of more than 3-4 hours the specimen should be refrigerated.

Clinical details should include the duration of symptoms and relevant information, such as foreign travel, use of antibiotics, contacts, suspected food poisoning and whether the diarrhoea is community or hospital-acquired. If the diarrhoea is community-acquired, the specimen will be routinely investigated for *Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter, E.coli O157* and parasites. If there are multiple cases of diarrhoea, *E.coli O157* suspected and/or vomiting on a ward, a member of the Infection Control Team should be informed as soon as possible.

Formed stool specimens will not be processed unless by special arrangement.

**Fluids and Aspirates**

Should be sent in a plain, leak-proof, screw-capped container. Ideal volume for testing is 3-20mL. Some fluids such as ascitic and peritoneal dialysis fluid benefit by inoculation directly into blood culture bottles. However, this method of analysis is not currently listed within our scope of accreditation. If blood culture bottles are sent it is essential that a separate specimen is also sent in a plain leak-proof, screw-capped container for direct microscopy and direct culture to ensure correct interpretation of results. Differential white cell counts will only be undertaken on ascitic fluid if clinical details suggest Spontaneous Bacterial Peritonitis (SBP) and will also be routinely performed on the first peritoneal dialysis fluid sent.

Cell counts and direct inoculation into blood culture bottles on other normally sterile fluids have not been found to be beneficial and should not be requested.
**Genital Chlamydia trachomatis diagnosis**

Nucleic acid amplification testing (NAAT) is the preferred method for detection of genital C. trachomatis infection. Specimens should be taken using the specific collection kits supplied by the laboratory (Aptima collection tubes). The following specimens are appropriate:

**Female:**
- Endocervical swab - if visualisation of the cervix is required for another reason.
- Vulvo-vaginal swab (may be self-taken)
- First void urine or urethral swab – urine and urethral sampling alone is not recommended since infection may be missed, however, it is valuable when this is the only specimen available.

**Male:**
- First void urine or urethral swab.

All specimens received for Chlamydia NAAT are also routinely tested for N. gonorrhoeae (GC). A swab for GC culture is also recommended to allow for susceptibility testing if isolated.

**Cervical and high vaginal swabs (HVS)**

These must be taken with the help of a speculum and sent to the laboratory in transport medium. It is important to avoid vulval contamination of the swab. For trichomonas, swab the posterior fornix. If there are obvious candidal plaques, swab the lesions. If pelvic infection is suspected, swab the cervical os.

An HVS alone is unsuitable for the diagnosis of gonorrhoea and investigation of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease. In the investigation of patients with lower abdominal pain who might have pelvic inflammatory disease, do not routinely take swabs if there is no vaginal discharge or if the clinical examination is normal. In this case an endocervical swab should be submitted for Chlamydia using the NAATS kit.

If Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) is suspected send an air-dried smear of the vaginal discharge for microscopy.

In the event of rape or sexual abuse, specimens should be referred to the Police dealing with the case.

There is no need to submit for culture an HVS or IUCD from a patient in whom actinomyces-like organisms have been seen on a cervical smear; these are constituents of the normal flora of the vagina.

**Urethral Swabs**

These may be useful for the diagnosis of gonorrhoea, chlamydial and other infections. They must be taken with care - avoid contamination with flora from the vulva or the foreskin. Small swabs are available for this purpose and should be sent to the laboratory as soon as possible in transport medium for bacterial culture or specific swabs for chlamydia.

If a slide has been examined in the clinic or surgery, the result should be included with the clinical information.

**Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA/MSSA) Screening**

Swabs taken from the nose, groin/perineum, wounds or skin lesions and catheter urines are suitable for screening for Staphylococcus aureus. If normal request forms are used, please state ‘MRSA
SCREEN’ or *Staph aureus* screening (MSSA) NOT ‘MCS as the investigation required. If ICE request please use one ICE request per sample. Place all specimens from one patient in a single bag with one screening form. If the patient has had MRSA previously please state in the clinical details.

These swabs may also be used by the laboratory for screening for meticillin susceptible *S. aureus* (MSSA) in pre-operative cardiac patients or burns patients so please state this on the form to ensure correct processing. Refer to the Trust’s Infection Control Policies.

**Cross infection screen / Renal / Pre-operative screens**

A specific request form is available for cross infection screening (for MRSA, *Staph aureus* and multi-resistant coliforms), this can be used for multiple samples and where ICE requesting is not available.

**Non-MRSA screening swabs**

Swabs may be taken to screen for a variety of organisms e.g. *acinetobacter*, *enterobacter*, *pseudomonas* etc. in addition to MRSA and MSSA. If ordering in ICE select the Non-MRSA option and pick the organism you are screening for from the drop down menu. If the organism is not listed then please include the name of the organism you are screening for in the clinical details. If sending a paper request please state organism screen required on the form.

**Pernasal Swabs for *Bordetella pertussis***

Pernasal swabs are the most reliable way of making the diagnosis of whooping cough. Special ENT transwabs are available from the laboratory.

Pertussis serology is usually more useful in adults presenting with a prolonged cough. PCR on pernasal swabs or nasopharyngeal aspirates is now also available for the diagnosis of *B. pertussis* infection.

**Sputum**

Sputum is of little value in the diagnosis of lower respiratory tract infection (with the exception of TB) - see bronchoalveolar lavage. The aim is to collect deep respiratory secretions without contamination by upper respiratory tract bacteria. If sent, purulent sputum, not saliva, is required (saliva will be discarded by the laboratory). Specimens which macroscopically prove to be largely saliva or mucoid specimens yield no useful information and will not be cultured. Do not collect shortly after the patient has been drinking, eating or cleaning the teeth. Specimens should be taken wherever possible before antibiotic therapy is given as specimens obtained after antibiotic therapy has been initiated are of little value and may even yield misleading results. They should not therefore be submitted for microbiological examination.

If tuberculosis is suspected, send three specimens of early morning sputum taken on consecutive days.

- Urgent microscopy for AAFB
- Microscopy for AAFB
- Culture for AAFB

For patients suspected of having community-acquired pneumonia blood cultures are essential. Please send separate sample and form to Cytology if cytology is requested.
**Throat Swabs**

Distinguishing between viral and streptococcal pharyngitis on clinical grounds is frequently impossible and correct diagnosis depends on the culture of appropriate throat swabs for bacteriology and/or virology. Sampling errors in swabbing the throat are frequent. The best results are obtained from specimens taken by vigorous rather than gentle application of the swab to the posterior portion of the pharynx, tonsillar areas and areas of ulceration, exudation or membrane formation. Routine bacterial culture will exclude β–haemolytic streptococci only.

If the patient has recurrent or persistent pharyngitis/ sore throat or is admitted to hospital with a severe sore throat, this must be stated on the request form to ensure that culture for *Fusobacterium necrophorum* is included.

**Please inform laboratory if diphtheria is clinically suspected or appropriate culture may not be undertaken. In addition, inform a medical microbiologist and report to the Consultant for Communicable Disease Control (CCDC).**

**Tips / cannulae**

Urinary catheter tips are unsuitable for the diagnosis of UTI and are not processed. An MSU should be submitted for the diagnosis of UTI.

Intravenous catheter tips are not suitable for the diagnosis of bacteraemia. Tips will not normally be processed unless evidence of clinical infection (systemic infection or localised line site infection) is indicated in the clinical details. Peripheral and line blood cultures taken at the same time are the specimens of choice to diagnose line associated bacteraemia.

Epidural tips should only be sent if there is clinical evidence of infection.

**Line-related infections**

Do not send intravascular line tips on removal of the line if there are no clinical reasons to suspect that the patient is septic. For suspected line-related infections, send two sets of blood cultures, one from the line itself and one from a peripheral vein, as well as the tip. If line has been used for Total Parenteral Nutrition this should be noted on request form.

**Tissues and Biopsies**

Specimens received in formalin are unsuitable for bacterial culture. Large specimens should be sent in a plain, leakproof, screw capped container and transported to the laboratory as soon as possible. Smaller specimens, or those where a delay in transportation to the laboratory is likely, should be placed in a similar container and covered with sterile normal saline to prevent desiccation.

Biopsies for the culture of *Helicobacter pylori* are referred to the PHE Colindale laboratory and users should contact them directly to arrange for specific culture medium to be sent which is then sent to the laboratory for referral.
More than one tissue/fluid specimen is required for the exclusion of infection in orthopaedic surgery undertaken for revision of prostheses. Ideally, up to 5 specimens should be taken from different areas using a sterile set of instruments for each specimen, and sent for culture.

**Urine**

**Diagnosis of UTI**

Before sending to the laboratory urines should be screened in the clinical setting using dipsticks that are able to detect both leucocyte esterase and nitrites. This will give an almost immediate indication as to whether UTI is likely and for the need to culture in all but a few patient groups. Please follow the urinalysis algorithm before submitting any samples to the laboratory. There is a strict rejection policy in place for urine samples that are submitted without the relevant information or screening. Urine catheter tips will not be processed. There is no such thing as a routine MSU or CSU. Specimens should be sent only on clinical grounds. Sensitivities on isolates from CSUs will be withheld unless there is clinical information to suggest that the patient is actively infected, i.e. pyrexia, septicaemia, etc. If the specimen cannot be sent immediately to the laboratory, refrigerate until transport is available. In the absence of pyuria, investigations to exclude TB will not usually be undertaken. Early Morning Urine (EMU) collection kits for TB are supplied by Pathology consumables on request.

**Clean-voided midstream urine** is preferred for bacterial, and fungal cultures. Transport the sample to the laboratory within 4-6 hours is essential unless the specimen can be adequately refrigerated e.g. overnight. The reliability of culture results depends on the avoidance of contamination and prompt transport. It is recommended, where practicable, that in females the perineal area is cleansed with soap and water prior to collection of the specimen. The patient must be told not to collect the first part of the urine to avoid contamination with urethral organisms. In males, retraction of the foreskin is adequate and prior cleansing is not required.

Without stopping the stream the specimen is collected in a sterile or clinically clean utensil i.e. foil bowl or specimen container by intercepting the stream. If the specimen is collected in a foil bowl and greater than 2ml transfer to an analyser ready boric acid urine container. If less than 2ml please use a white top universal container. If a white top universal container is used please ensure that the clinical details state only a small volume of urine could be obtained. If there is likely to be a delay in collection the specimen should be refrigerated (not in the food or drugs refrigerator).

**Catheter** specimens of urine (CSU) should only be sent if the patient is systemically unwell or about to undergo urinary instrumentation or surgery and then should be obtained aseptically with a sterile syringe and needle following disinfection of the catheter specimen port with an isopropyl alcohol. Long-term urinary catheters are invariably colonised with one or more microorganisms.

Try to collect the specimen within 1 hr of specimen transport to the laboratory. The specimen should not be collected from the drainage bag, only from the sampling port. Clamp off the drainage tube immediately below the sampling port and leave for several minutes to allow enough urine to collect for sampling. Using a needle and syringe insert the needle through the latex or plastic port and withdraw 7ml of urine. Transfer the urine to a sterile container containing boric acid. If the specimen is not to be transported within one hour it must be refrigerated.
Clean-catch urine  Thorough peri-urethral cleaning is recommended; the whole sample collected in a sterile container and greater than 2ml transfer to a sterile urine container containing boric acid. If less than 2ml please use a white top container.

Bag Urine (BAG) Commonly used for infants and young children. A sterile bag is taped over the genitalia and the urine collected. Frequent problems of contamination are encountered with this method. The whole sample should be collected into a sterile container and greater than 2ml transfer to a sterile urine container containing boric acid. If less than 2ml please use a white top container.

Ileal conduit – urostomy urine – nephrostomy catheters Urine obtained via a catheter passed aseptically into the stoma opening after removal of the external appliance. Results are difficult to interpret. If greater than 2ml transfer to a sterile urine container containing boric acid. If less than 2ml please use a white top container.

Supra-pubic aspirate (SPA) Urine obtained from the bladder by aseptic aspiration with a needle and syringe. If greater than 2ml transfer to a sterile urine container containing boric acid. If less than 2ml please use a white top container. Please ensure that the sample is clearly marked as a supra-pubic aspirate, in order to avoid confusion with samples collected from supra-pubic catheters.

Cystoscope urine (CU) Urine obtained via a cystoscope either from the bladder or from individual ureters. If greater than 2ml transfer to a sterile urine container containing boric acid. If less than 2ml please use a white top container.

Stamey Test Samples collected for diagnosis of prostatitis
- The initial 5-8ml voided urine (urethral urine)
- MSU (bladder urine)
- Expressed prostatic secretions following prostatic massage
- First 2-3ml voided urine following prostatic massage

Early morning urine (EMU) All of the first urine voided in the morning, usually collected for the diagnosis of infection with low number of organisms. If greater than 2ml transfer to a sterile urine container containing boric acid. If less than 2ml please use a white top container.

Pad Urines Urine expressed from a sterile ‘nappy’ pad into a plain urine universal. If greater than 2ml transfer to a sterile urine container containing boric acid. If less than 2ml please use a white top container.

Diagnosis of mycobacterial infection
Urine specimens will be cultured for mycobacteria only if:
1. Request form includes relevant clinical details eg., renal tuberculosis, miliary tuberculosis, proven sterile pyuria etc.
2. Clinical details indicate that the patient is immunocompromised
3. By prior arrangement with the medical staff in bacteriology

Specimens that do not fulfil any of these criteria will not be processed.
Send 3 entire early morning urine (EMU) (when urine is most concentrated) taken on 3 consecutive days. Large volume EMU containers are available on request from the laboratory.

**Boric acid containers should not be used for the investigation of mycobacterial infection**

**Diagnosis of Schistosomiasis (Bilharzia)**

3 complete urine specimens for the investigation of schistosomiasis should be taken between 10:00h – 14:00h. In patients with haematuria, 3 terminal urine specimens may be adequate for diagnosis, taken over a 24 hour period.

**Detection of urinary legionella antigen or pneumococcal urinary antigen**

Send plain urine specimen for testing.

**Wound and Pus Swabs**

Always state the site and nature of the wound on the request form. This is essential for correct laboratory processing and interpretation of laboratory results.

**Pus**, if present, is the specimen of choice and should always be sent if available in preference to a swab. Aspirate any material with a sterile needle and syringe and transfer to a clean, leakproof, screw capped universal container. Do not send to the laboratory in the syringe and needle as this is hazardous to staff handling the specimen. If it is necessary to send the syringe then carefully remove the needle and cap the syringe. It is unnecessary to send routine specimens from the same site on consecutive days unless there is clinical deterioration.

**Wound swabs** should only be taken if there is clinical evidence of infection, unless there is an infection control reason. A wound swab should be obtained after the wound is cleaned, but before antibiotics commenced or changed, and it should be taken directly from an infected site avoiding contaminating undamaged skin or mucous membranes. Rotate the swab in pus or exudate and place it in the transport media.

**Venous Ulcer swabs**

Superficial swabs taken from ulcers are not generally helpful as the organisms isolated may represent superficial colonisation only. The guidelines issued by the Royal College of Nursing² state that “Routine bacteriological swabbing is unnecessary unless there is evidence of clinical infection such as inflammation / redness / cellulitis, increased pain, purulent exudates, rapid deterioration of the ulcer, pyrexia”.

Swabs submitted from venous ulcers will not be processed unless relevant clinical details and symptoms as stated above are given on the request form.

Swabs from tropical ulcers should be submitted with relevant clinical information including details of recent foreign travel.

**Leg ulcers** Do not send swabs unless there is evidence of infection, even if the ulcer if failing to heal. Take the swab from beneath the margin of the ulcer; a foul odour is consistent with the presence of anaerobes. Ensure the swab and request form are labelled as the specimen policy.
**Ear Swabs**
Please specify whether the specimen is obtained from a patient with otitis externa or media. A swab of the infected area, obtained before antibiotics are initiated, should be sent to the laboratory in transport medium.

**Collection of Peritoneal Dialysis Fluids (Cloudy fluids or those suspected of infection)**
Disinfect with an alcohol wipe the portion of the dialysis bag or port from which the fluid is to be taken and allow to dry. Collect at least 30ml of fluid through the disinfected area using a sterile needle and syringe and then place in a sterile container. Place in the plastic transport bag. If the specimen is likely to be delayed before being sent to the laboratory it may be refrigerated at 4ºC but this is best avoided.

**Collection of Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) and operative specimens**
Some specimens are collected by invasive procedures, for example lumbar puncture, bone marrow aspirate, bronchoscopy, or at operation under general anaesthesia. Such specimens tend to be non-repeatable and from normally sterile sites, hence results of culture or microscopy are of special importance. It is the requesting doctor's responsibility to arrange for rapid transport of such specimens to the laboratory and provide notification of their arrival in-hours or out-of-hours to the on-call BMS if the specimen is urgent.

CSF must be collected by means of strict aseptic technique in order to minimise specimen contamination. The volume of CSF obtained will limit the number of investigations available. Indicate, first, second, third and fourth specimens where applicable. Indicate if the sample is taken from an EVD, shunt, etc.

Serial red blood cells counts are unnecessary to confirm a diagnosis of subarachnoid haemorrhage and will NOT be carried out. Do not request ‘culture’ unless meningitis is suspected. Requests for PCR must be authorised by the Consultant-In-Charge of the patient.

The results of microscopy are available on the computer as soon as they are available. Positive culture results are communicated to the patient’s doctor by a medical microbiologist.
MYCOLOGY

COLLECTION OF SPECIMENS FOR MYCOLOGY
Clinical information MUST include contact with animals, occupation and recent travel abroad.

Skin
Specimens from skin lesions should be collected by scraping skin from the advancing edge of the lesion with a blunt scalpel blade or other sharp instrument. Place the scraping into a special Mycology transport pack (Mycotrans or other commercial equivalent). Please make sure you send enough material for both microscopy and culture. At least 5mm² of skin flakes are required. NB swabs are of little value for the investigation of dermatophyte infections.

Nails
Clippings should include the full thickness of the nail and extend as far back from the edge as possible. Samples should be sent in a Mycology transport pack. Several small parings are preferred to one large sample in order to optimise culture results. Nail parings should be taken from the diseased area, the discoloured or brittle parts of the nail and cut back as far as possible from the free edge as some fungi are restricted to the lower parts. Scrapings can also be taken from under the nail to supplement the clipping. Nail clippings often fail to grow fungi even if present.

Hair
Hair should be plucked from affected areas together with skin scrapings from associated scalp lesions. Broken lustreless hair should be selected from the margin of the scalp lesion. Hair should be removed with epilating forceps. The hair follicle and one inch of proximal hair should be sent to the laboratory in the commercial kit available from pathology. Receipt of cut distal ends will not be processed.

VIROLOGY

INTRODUCTION
Developments in diagnostic virology now allow the clinician the opportunity to make a rapid identification of the cause of many common viral illnesses. This is critical for the appropriate and timely use of anti-viral agents, and the application of infection control measures. Furthermore, the positive identification of a viral illness may protect patients from needless exposure to antibiotics.

This section lists the tests performed locally, as well as commonly requested tests referred to other laboratories, with brief notes on clinical uses and appropriate specimen types. There are two main sections: serology and molecular diagnostics. General guidance only is given for each section.

Please note that turn-around times are influenced by the frequency of testing and the need for further/confirmatory tests, as well as the transport arrangements between the laboratory and the requesting hospital or practice. If bacteriology and/or mycology tests are required on the same sample, please ensure that sufficient specimen has been taken, and divide appropriately if possible.

It is essential to include full clinical details on request forms, in addition to the usual patient details. These details include the date of onset, nature of symptoms, occupation, exposure to infected
individuals, the gestational age if pregnant and any relevant travel details and immunisation history. Interpretable comments may not be able to be added without the clinical context.

**MICROBIAL SEROLOGY**

**General guidance**

During the acute phase of viral infection, specimens for virus nucleic acid detection (swabs, NPA, BAL, faeces, fluids, EDTA blood) should be sent whenever possible, since a detectable serological response may not have occurred.

In some cases, acute and convalescent blood samples are required to allow a clear interpretation. Typically, a convalescent blood refers to one taken at least 10 days after the onset of the illness. Paired acute and convalescent samples should be separated by at least 7 days. Six (6) mLs of clotted blood (plain tube/no additive/serum separation) is sufficient for most serology test combinations. Where a test request profile includes both local and referred tests, additional volume is often required. Electronic test ordering of tests aids in assisting correct sample volumes for the number of tests.

Clinical details are essential to obtain the correct interpretative comment, and to allow additional relevant testing.

Whereas the presence of IgM and IgA antibody is usually a marker of acute or recent infection, IgG antibody may represent past infection. IgG antibody against common infecting agents (e.g. CMV, EBV, VZV) may also be acquired from transfused blood or blood products, or across the placenta. Such IgG may remain detectable for several months. Similarly, the persistence of IgM is highly variable (range from one month in some cases to over one year in others e.g. treponema, CMV and toxoplasma), potentially making clear interpretation of results difficult. Certain IgM assays may show cross-reactivity (e.g. CMV and EBV; parvovirus B19 and rubella) in these cases the clinical and epidemiological data together with IgG seroconversion or IgG avidity may help to clarify the result. Occasionally it may not be possible to distinguish true reactivity from a non-specific cross-reactivity.

Acute Epstein-Barr virus infection may lead to polyclonal stimulation of B lymphocytes and the production of IgM against distant past infections. EBV serology is done on selected IgM positive results (for example, CMV) to investigate this possibility.

Nucleic acid detection may be helpful where the IgM results are difficult to interpret, for example, distinguishing between recent EBV, CMV, and parvovirus B19 infection.

**MOLECULAR DIAGNOSTICS**

Detection of viral nucleic acid by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) offers high sensitivity and specificity. It is essential that specimens are secure and not exposed to external contamination of the container. When possible, send a separate specimen to Virology, to reduce the risk of contamination (and, in the case of CSF, retain the integrity of the cellular components). Specific swabs with transport medium suitable for molecular tests are supplied by the laboratory; please contact the laboratory if you are unsure about the appropriate swab kit. Do NOT send swabs in bacteriology medium as they are suboptimal.
When requesting PCR testing of certain non-blood specimen types it can be important to determine whether viraemia is also present in order to evaluate the significance of the result. Examples include testing bronchoalveolar lavage fluid for CMV and HSV, vitreous fluid for herpesviruses, and CSF specimens sent from neonates and the immunocompromised. In these settings please send a contemporary EDTA blood for the relevant PCR; please contact the laboratory if there is any doubt over which specimen types to send.

The nature of most molecular diagnostic techniques currently precludes them as part of the on-call service, and they are performed according to a defined laboratory timetable, using batches of specimens. The need for immediate antiviral therapy in some illnesses (e.g. suspected HSV encephalitis) means that initiation of treatment is still required whilst awaiting a result. Please discuss any such cases with an infection specialist if in doubt.

NAAT tests are available for the following:

- **Respiratory viruses** (Influenza A and B, respiratory syncytial virus, human metapneumovirus, adenovirus, parainfluenza 1,2,3, Rhinovirus)
  - Respiratory samples including nose and throat swabs, throat gargles, nasopharyngeal aspirates, sputum, bronchoalveolar lavage, ET secretions
- **Adenovirus**
  - Blood (quantitative PCR, immunocompromised patients), Respiratory secretions, eye swabs, CSF (qualitative PCR)
- **BK virus** (quantitative PCR)
  - Blood, urine (immunocompromised)
- **CMV**
  - Blood, amniotic fluid, CSF, urine, eye fluid (quantitative) Bronchoalveolar lavage, sputum (qualitative),
- **Enterovirus** (qualitative)
  - CSF, blood, faeces, eye swab, throat swab
- **EBV** (quantitative)
  - CSF, blood, eye fluid
- **Gastroenteritis viruses**- Norovirus, adenovirus, rotavirus, astrovirus and sapovirus
  - Faeces, vomit
- **Hepatitis B** (quantitative)- blood
- **Hepatitis C** (qualitative and quantitative, optional genotyping)
  - Blood
- **HSV 1 and 2** (qualitative)
  - Lesion swabs, CSF, blood, vesicle fluid, bronchoalveolar lavage, sputum, eye swabs, eye fluid
- **HHV6** (quantitative)
  - CSF, blood
- **HIV** quantitative (viral load)
  - Blood, CSF (rarely)
- **Parvovirus** (quantitative)
  - Blood, amniotic fluid
- **VZV** (qualitative)
  - Lesion swab, vesicle fluid, CSF, blood, eye fluid
Please contact the laboratory to discuss the availability of PCR tests not listed above, or if clarification is needed on the appropriateness of the test, or the relevant specimen type.

Please also note that not all specimen types as listed are available as accredited procedures. For information relating to laboratory scope of accreditation please follow link below;


**SCREENING TESTS**

The laboratory provides a service for non-diagnostic tests such as;

**Infertility screening:**
- Males – Hepatitis B (including HBcAb and HBsAg), Hepatitis C, Syphilis and HIV serology.
- Females - Hepatitis B (including HBcAb and HBsAg), Hepatitis C, Syphilis and HIV, Chlamydia trachomatis and Rubella serology (Immunity)

**Antenatal screening**
- Hepatitis B, HIV and Syphilis serology.
- Please note Rubella Immunity is not routinely available as part of the routine antenatal booking screen in accordance with the IDPS guidance. Please indicate clearly stating reason if Rubella Immunity is required on the request.
NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES
It is the statutory duty of the clinician responsible for a patient suffering from a notifiable diseases. Guidance for this is available:


Urgent cases should be telephoned in order to allow that health protection teams to implement any action required in the community as rapidly as possible, such as contact tracing, prophylaxis, and quarantining. Telephone contact should be followed by written notification.

Control of infection
Infection Control advice is provided at each Trust site by the Director of Infection Prevention and Control (DIPC), Consultant Medical Microbiologists and the Infection Control Nurses. Contact details for these are available via switchboard.

Departmental Guidelines
The department has compiled many documents giving advice either on specific subjects or for specific users. These are available on the NBT, UHBristol and RUH intranet sites as well as the PHE National website at www.phe.gov.uk

References
1 Preventing person-to-person spread following gastrointestinal infections: guidelines for public health physicians and environmental health officers. Working group former PHLS Advisory Committee on Gastrointestinal Infections; CDPH, Vol 7; No. 4 December 2004
2 Clinical practice guidelines for the management of patients with venous leg ulcers. Royal College of nursing, centre for evidence-Based Nursing and Department of Nursing. 1998, University of Liverpool
## Appendix 1 - DEPARTMENTAL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### NBT Site

#### Laboratory Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Individual</th>
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#### Medical/Clinical Scientist staff

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### BRI Site

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### Scientific and Technical Staff

The department employs a range of scientific and technical staff (Clinical Scientists, Biomedical Scientists, Medical Laboratory Assistants) as well as admin and clerical support staff.

All of our professional staff registered with national bodies, such as the British Medical Association or the HCPC and are regularly assessed both internally / externally further ensuring and continually improving the quality of our service that we offer to all our users.

### General Enquiries and Laboratory Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (Site/Department)</th>
<th>Details/Individual</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory Administrator (PHE)</td>
<td>Helen Thresher</td>
<td>0117 414 6266</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Helen.thresher@nbt.nhs.uk">Helen.thresher@nbt.nhs.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Helen.Thresher@phe.gov.uk">Helen.Thresher@phe.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Secretary (BRI site)</td>
<td>Angela Pollard</td>
<td>0117 342 9268</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Angela.Pollard@uhbristol.nhs.uk">Angela.Pollard@uhbristol.nhs.uk</a></td>
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<td>Department</td>
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<td>Nose and Throat swabs, Throat gargles, Nasopharyngeal aspirates, Sputum, Bronchoalveolar lavage</td>
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<td>Microscopy for crystals performed by Cytology - please send a separate request. Please request TB culture if required.</td>
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<td>Do not send large tissue specimens - only send sections believed to be infected. It is the requesting doctor’s responsibility to arrange for transport and provide notification to the laboratory of urgent specimens. Please request TB culture if required.</td>
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<td>Routine culture and sensitivities</td>
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<td>Do not send intravascular line tips if there is no reason to suspect infection. For suspected line-related infections, send two sets of blood cultures, one from the line and one from a peripheral vein, as well as the tip. Urinary catheter tips will not be processed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bacteriology</td>
<td>Eye swabs</td>
<td>Amies Sigma Transswab (MW176S)</td>
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<td>Conjunctival swabs should be sent for the diagnosis of superficial infections. Sigma Transswab (MW176S) transswabs should be used for bacterial culture and plain swabs in special transport medium for chlamydia. A special chlamydia slide may also be sent for immunofluorescence. Conjunctiva swabs should be collected in transport medium. Swabs for chlamydia investigations are available from the Laboratory. Ensure the swab and request form are labelled as the specimen policy</td>
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<td>Eye swabs</td>
<td>Flocked swab in viral transport medium</td>
<td>PCR (In house - HSV, Adenovirus)</td>
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<td>Corneal Scrapes</td>
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<td>Microscopy</td>
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<td>Corneal ulcer kits are available from the laboratory and a stock is held in the casualty department of the Bristol Eye Hospital and the Royal United Hospital in Bath. These consist of a glass bijou containing 0.5ml of transport broth for bacteriological analysis inside a plastic 60ml container, plus 2 marked slides. Please ensure that these kits are in date and the broth not desiccated before use.</td>
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<td>Helicobacter pylori</td>
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<td>C. trachomatis Detection</td>
<td>Urine, Urethral swab, Vaginal swabs, self taken vulvo-vaginal swabs</td>
<td>Aptima Tubes - sample type specific</td>
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<td>N. gonorrhoea</td>
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<td>Nose/ axilla/ groin others as protocol</td>
<td>Swabs - Single Sigma Transwab (MW176S) or double Sigma Transwab (MW167S), CSU - Sterile Boricon universal, Sputum and Fluids - White top universal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Toxoplasma</td>
<td>Clotted blood</td>
<td>Total antibody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Varicella zoster</td>
<td>Clotted blood</td>
<td>IgG only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteriology</td>
<td>Routine Aerobiology</td>
<td>Theatre, isolator room, BMT, AHU, pharmacy</td>
<td>On request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteriology</td>
<td>Bioburden (SSD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteriology</td>
<td>Environmental Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteriology</td>
<td>Susceptibility testing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteriology</td>
<td>Sterility checking (Bristol Eye Bank/Pharmacy)</td>
<td></td>
<td>On request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteriology</td>
<td>Donor Milk Bank</td>
<td>Universal (white top)</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteriology</td>
<td>Steriliser Performance and Commissioning checks (CSSD)</td>
<td></td>
<td>On request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mycology</td>
<td>Skin Scrapings</td>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>Mycology collection kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mycology</td>
<td>Nail clippings</td>
<td>Nail</td>
<td>Mycology collection kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mycology</td>
<td>Hair</td>
<td>Hair</td>
<td>Mycology collection kit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The laboratory provides a screening service for the detection of antibodies to Treponemal sp. The laboratory is also a reference laboratory for Treponemal serology and provides a confirmation service.
## Appendix 3 – Clinical Details
(VTM= Virus Transport Medium)
(BTM = Bacterial Transport Medium – Sigma Transwab)
(PCB = Blood in plain or gel separation vacutainer with no additives)
Paired (PCB) = Acute and convalescent (10 -14 days after onset) serum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical Diagnosis</th>
<th>Preferred Specimen (s)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abscess</td>
<td>Pus or material in a clean leakproof screw capped universal container is preferable to a swab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actinomycosis</td>
<td>Pus or material from dacrocystitis in a clean leakproof screw capped universal container is preferable to a swab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS (Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome)</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for HIV antibody test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amoebiasis</td>
<td>Three specimens of faeces taken on separate days for cyst examination. 5 -10 ml of blood (PCB) for serology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspergillosis</td>
<td>Serum for aspergillus antibodies, antigen (galactomannan) and/or PCR, Sputum, BAL, sinus swab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteraemia</td>
<td>Blood culture.</td>
<td>See blood culture procedures above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacterial Vaginosis</td>
<td>Air dried smear of vaginal discharge</td>
<td>Send on labelled glass slide in approved slide holder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartonella</td>
<td>PCB for serology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botulism (Food poisoning)</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for toxin testing. Faeces and suspect food (if possible) for culture and toxin testing.</td>
<td>Consult a medical microbiologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neonatal botulism</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for toxin testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wound botulism infection</td>
<td>Pus/tissue specimens for culture and blood (PCB) for toxin testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronchiolitis</td>
<td>Nasopharyngeal aspirate (or BAL) for Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) for RSV, influenza A and B parainfluenza viruses, adenovirus and Rhinovirus.</td>
<td>See blood culture procedures above. PLEASE ENSURE SPECIMEN IS LABELLED AS 'DANGER OF INFECTION'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brucellosis</td>
<td>3 sets of blood culture bottles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood (PCB) for serology.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consult a medical Microbiologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidaemia</td>
<td>Blood culture.</td>
<td>As for bacteraemia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Specimen Type</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candida vaginosis</td>
<td>High vaginal swab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickenpox</td>
<td>Vesicle fluid or swab in VTM for PCR Paired specimens of serum in certain</td>
<td>Discuss with a medical virologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>circumstances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlamydia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Respiratory infection</td>
<td>Paired PCB for serology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Genital infection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Either a urethral swab using chlamydia NAAT collection kit or first voided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>urine clearly labelled for chlamydia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Endocervical swab or vulvo-vaginal swab using chlamydia/gonorrhoea NAAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>collection kit. Urine or urethral swab may be sent in addition to the above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>but are not preferred alone unless no other specimens are possible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for serology is sometimes helpful in PID.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis</td>
<td>Chlamydia/gonorrhoea NAAT swab (Aptima vaginal swab should be used for eye</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>swabs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJD</td>
<td>DO NOT TAKE OR SEND SPECIMENS BEFORE CONSULTING A MEDICAL MICROBIOLOGIST.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis</td>
<td>Swab for bacteriology in BTM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swab for virus PCR in VTM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chlamydia/gonorrhoea NAAT swab (Aptima vaginal swab should be used for eye</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>swabs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corneal Ulcer</td>
<td>Place scalpel with scraped material directly into glass bijou containing</td>
<td>Corneal scrape kits available from laboratory – stock held in casualty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>transport medium. Additional scrape material should be smeared onto 2 glass</td>
<td>at BEH (UH Bristol) and on the Eye Ward (RUH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>slides within the marked area (bacteriology and virology)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Label the frosted end with patient name</td>
<td>Please phone lab before sending and state if Acanthamoeba culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swab in VTM for viral detection by PCR</td>
<td>required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coxsackie virus infection</td>
<td>Faeces for enterovirus PCR</td>
<td>Consult a medical virologist if infection suspected in SCBU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Throat swab in VTM for enterovirus PCR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSF from patients with meningitis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cryptococcosis</td>
<td>Biopsy</td>
<td>Consult a medical microbiologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) specimen for antigen detection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cytomegalovirus</td>
<td>Clotted blood for CMV IgM/ IgG (PCB)</td>
<td>Discuss with a virologist if systemic infection is suspected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Required Tests</td>
<td>Additional Instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cytomegalovirus (cont)</strong></td>
<td>Three urines taken in the first three weeks of life should be taken to investigate congenital infection, as well as blood for IgM. Discuss with a virologist if considering antiviral therapy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diarrhoea</strong></td>
<td>EDTA blood is required for CMV DNA detection</td>
<td>3 urines taken in the first three weeks of life should be taken to investigate congenital infection, as well as blood for IgM. Discuss with a virologist if considering antiviral therapy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plain urine in a 30 ml sterile container.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSF, BAL, sputum may also be processed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observe any suspect food, travel abroad etc. on the request form and the occupation if relevant e.g. food handler, farmer etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If an outbreak is suspected, contact medical Microbiologist /Virologist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diphtheria</strong></td>
<td>Faeces - 3 specimens – do not send more than one specimen a day</td>
<td>Refer to 'food poisoning' section if relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If patient has been in hospital for &gt; 3 days only send a sample for C. difficile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Echovirus infection</strong></td>
<td>Nose and throat swabs</td>
<td>Inform a medical microbiologist and the CCDC immediately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faeces for enterovirus PCR</td>
<td>Details of immunisation history and foreign travel essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Throat swab in VTM for enterovirus PCR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSF from patients with meningitis</td>
<td>Consult a medical virologist if infection suspected in SCBU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eczema</strong></td>
<td>Swab of skin lesion</td>
<td>Consult a medical virologist if infection suspected in SCBU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swab in VTM for HSV and VZV PCR if eczema herpeticum is suspected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encephalitis</strong></td>
<td>CSF</td>
<td>Discuss with a medical virologist Blood for serology (PCB) may be valuable in some cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faeces for enterovirus PCR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Throat swab in VTM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Endocarditis</strong></td>
<td>3 sets of blood cultures taken at least an hour apart over a period of 24 hours. If patient very unwell 3 specimens taken separately over 1 hour are acceptable this does not agree with advice in blood culture section earlier</td>
<td>See blood culture procedures above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for Q Fever, Bartonella, chlamydia and fungal serology if indicated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serial C – Reactive Protein (CRP) measurements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enteric fever (Typhoid and paratyphoid)</strong></td>
<td>Blood cultures</td>
<td>Consult a medical microbiologist immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urine for typhoid culture</td>
<td>Give details of foreign travel, contacts etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faeces (generally positive later in illness).</td>
<td>Clearance specimens are required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally bone marrow for culture.</td>
<td>Notify to the CCDC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Specimen Collection</td>
<td>Additional Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food poisoning</strong></td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td>Consult medical Microbiologist/Virologist and notify CCDC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspected food</td>
<td></td>
<td>Faecal specimens should be obtained as soon as possible after the onset of symptoms especially if viral diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vomit</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clearance specimens not normally required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fungal infection of skin, hair and nails</strong></td>
<td>Hair stumps</td>
<td>Mycology Transport packs are available from the laboratory or from the stores in Bath for transport of these specimens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skin scrapings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nail parings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Giardiasis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 specimens of faeces taken on consecutive days for cyst examination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glandular fever (Epstein Barr Virus)</strong></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for serology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monospot (Haematology)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gonorrhoea</strong></td>
<td>Swabs or urine for NAAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sigma Transwab of urethra, endocervix, rectum, conjunctiva and throat as indicated</td>
<td>HVS are unsuitable for gonorrhoea culture (though suitable for NAAT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hand foot and mouth disease</strong></td>
<td>Faeces, vesicle fluid or throat swab in VTM for enterovirus PCR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hepatitis (undiagnosed)</strong></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody and antigen tests</td>
<td>Consult a medical Virologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hepatitis A, B, C, E</strong></td>
<td>Blood (PCB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDTA blood is required for HBV and HCV viral load testing</td>
<td>Hepatitis C antibodies may not be detectable for up to 3 months after the date of onset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hepatitis C Qualitative PCR requires 1.5ml serum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hepatitis A IgM may not be detectable in the first week of the illness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Herpes simplex</strong></td>
<td>Swab from the base of a lesion in VTM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIV</strong></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for HIV antibody test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDTA blood if HIV viral load required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hydatid disease</strong></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Influenza</strong></td>
<td>Throat swab in VTM or throat washings for PCR</td>
<td>The current PCR test detects influenza A (seasonal H3N2, H1N1, pandemic 2009 vH1N1, Avian H5N1) and influenza B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nasopharyngeal aspirate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nose swab, sputum, BAL also processed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paired (PCB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legionnaires disease</strong></td>
<td>Sputum, lung biopsy, bronchial washings, pleural fluid for culture</td>
<td>DISCUSS WITH A MICROBIOLOGIST AND DERMATOLOGIST BEFORE SENDING SPECIMENS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urine for antigen detection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leishmaniasis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infection</td>
<td>Test Method</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leptospirosis</td>
<td>Paired (PCB) for antibody test</td>
<td>Consult a Microbiologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listeriosis</td>
<td>Blood cultures</td>
<td>Consult a Microbiologist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSF if clinically indicated</td>
<td>Serology is of no diagnostic value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyme disease</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody test</td>
<td>IgG antibodies to <em>Borrelia burgdorferi</em> are detectable in the majority of patients from 6 weeks after the onset of symptoms. A proportion of patients may produce detectable levels of antibody earlier. Date of onset plus clinical details supporting a diagnosis of infection must be supplied or specimens will not be tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lymphogranuloma venereum</td>
<td>Blood (PCB)</td>
<td>Swabs for PCR are appropriate where there is an ulcer or proctitis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5ml blood in EDTA –for thick and thin blood films (undertaken in Haematology)</td>
<td>Send specimens to Haematologist urgently. Consult Microbiologist or Infectious Diseases physician for clinical advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaria</td>
<td>If small numbers of parasites are present repeat specimens may be required to make a diagnosis. A minimum of 3 specimens is required to exclude malaria.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NB. Consider the possibility of Viral Haemorrhagic Fever</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>Throat swab in VTM</td>
<td>Contact public health to obtain salivary testing kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PCB for serology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningitis</td>
<td>CSF</td>
<td>Discuss all suspect cases of meningitis with a medical microbiologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blood culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Throat swab for bacterial culture from the patient</td>
<td>Notify to the CCDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) or EDTA container for PCR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molluscum contagiosum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discuss with virologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Throat swab in VTM. Saliva is acceptable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paired (PCB) for serology</td>
<td>Saliva collection kits are available from the Health protection units (0300 3038162) and are sent direct to Colindale for testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>Throat swab in VTM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faeces for enterovirus PCR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumps</td>
<td>Paired (PCB) for serology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-indigenous mycoses:</td>
<td>Blood (PCB)</td>
<td>Please discuss with Mycologist before sending specimens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Coccidioides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Histoplasmosis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Paracoccidioides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Blastomyces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orf</td>
<td>Discuss with virologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Recommended Tests</td>
<td>Additional Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Osteomyelitis</strong></td>
<td>Blood cultures&lt;br&gt;Deep operative specimens for culture&lt;br&gt;Blood (PCB) for ASO and Anti-staphylolysin tests is sometimes helpful&lt;br&gt;Consider serial CRP measurements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Otitis Media</strong></td>
<td>Ear swab in BTM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parvovirus (Erythrovirus)</strong></td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody test (and PCR if immunocompromised).</td>
<td>Must give date of onset and clinical details supporting diagnosis e.g. rash, arthritis, hydrops foetalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pelvic inflammatory disease</strong></td>
<td>Combined HVS/Endocervical Sigma Transswab for gonococcal or other bacterial infection. Triple swabs (HVS, CX, URE) also acceptable&lt;br&gt;Endocervical and/ or vulvo-vaginal swab for Chlamydia/gonorrhoea NAAT&lt;br&gt;Blood (PCB) for chlamydia antibody tests may be helpful in some cases</td>
<td>HVS are unsuitable for the diagnosis of gonorrhea culture but useful for NAATs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pneumonia</strong></td>
<td>Blood cultures&lt;br&gt;Purulent sputum for culture&lt;br&gt;Paired (PCB) for serology for atypical pneumonia screen&lt;br&gt;Urine for legionella antigen detection&lt;br&gt;BAL may be indicated but is essential if aspergillosis is suspected</td>
<td>Please give date of onset&lt;br&gt;Consider viral aetiology (send respiratory tract samples for PCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poliomyelitis</strong></td>
<td>Faeces&lt;br&gt;Throat swab in VTM</td>
<td>Consult a Virologist and inform the CCDC&lt;br&gt;Please note that currently used polio vaccines do not contain live virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pseudomembranous colitis</strong></td>
<td>Faeces for <em>Clostridium difficile</em> toxin. Specimen should be liquid or take shape of the collecting container</td>
<td>Clearance specimens are not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psittacosis</strong></td>
<td>Paired (PCB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Puerperal Fever</strong></td>
<td>Blood cultures.&lt;br&gt;High vaginal swabs&lt;br&gt;Urine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pyrexia of unknown origin</strong></td>
<td>Blood cultures.&lt;br&gt;Throat swabs&lt;br&gt;Urine&lt;br&gt;Faeces&lt;br&gt;Paired (PCB)</td>
<td>Discuss with a Microbiologist as other investigations may be required depending upon clinical history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q Fever (Coxiella infection)</strong></td>
<td>PCB for antibody tests if endocarditis suspected. Otherwise paired (PCB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Specimens</td>
<td>Additional Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies</td>
<td>DO NOT TAKE OR SEND SPECIMENS BEFORE CONSULTING A MEDICAL MICROBIOLOGIST OR Virologist</td>
<td>Inform CCDC immediately the diagnosis is suspected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)</td>
<td>Nasopharyngeal aspirate, Nose and throat swabs for PCR</td>
<td>Consult a Virologist. Full clinical details including travel history are essential to determine appropriate tests by the reference laboratory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rheumatic fever</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for ASO test</td>
<td>Clinical details are essential to determine the appropriate tests required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rickettsial infection</td>
<td>Blood (PCB)</td>
<td>Consult a Virologist. Full clinical details including travel history are essential to determine appropriate tests by the reference laboratory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubella</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody tests</td>
<td>Inform CCDC immediately the diagnosis is suspected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schistosomiasis</td>
<td>Urinary - 3 complete specimens of urine in 150 ml containers taken between 1000h – 1400h</td>
<td>Antibodies do not appear until at least 6 weeks post exposure. Ova not passed until 6-12 weeks post exposure. If asymptomatic, defer serology screening until 3 months post exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Septic arthritis</td>
<td>Blood cultures, Joint aspirate, Serial CRP measurements are useful for monitoring treatment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Septicaemia</td>
<td>Blood cultures (see bacteraemia), Urine, Relevant specimens from presumed primary focus if available</td>
<td>NB. If meningococcus is suspected, send an EDTA blood for PCR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shingles</td>
<td>Vesicle fluid for PCR, Vesicle swab</td>
<td>Discuss with a Virologist. Serology is not helpful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous Bacterial Peritonitis (SBP)</td>
<td>Ascitic fluid in plain sterile, leakproof container, IN ADDITION – ascitic fluid may be inoculated into a blood culture set</td>
<td>Cell count and differential will only be performed if clinical details state SBP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streptococcal sore throat</td>
<td>Throat swab</td>
<td>Please state if patient works in healthcare setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongyloidiaisis</td>
<td>See Worms</td>
<td>Blood for serology (PCB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Sample Type</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub acute sclerosing panencephalitis (SSPE)</td>
<td>CSF and paired blood (PCB)</td>
<td>Consult a medical virologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonsillitis</td>
<td>See streptococcal sore throat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxocariasis</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody test.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxoplasmosis</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody test.</td>
<td>Details of symptoms, date of onset etc. is vital, especially if the patient is pregnant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trichiniasis</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody test.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trichomonas</td>
<td>HVS - Sigma Transwab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trypanosomiasis</td>
<td>2.5 ml blood in EDTA</td>
<td>Consult a Microbiologist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
<td>Blood (PCB) for antibody test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Respiratory</td>
<td>3 consecutive daily early morning specimens of sputum for AAFB</td>
<td>Only send if patient has proven sterile pyuria, is immuno-compromised or after discussion with a medical microbiologist:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Renal</td>
<td>3 complete early morning specimens of urine</td>
<td>Large volume urine containers available from laboratory stores on request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Other sites</td>
<td>Consult a Microbiologist.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typhoid / paratyphoid</td>
<td>See enteric fever.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulcers &amp; pressure sores</td>
<td>Only recommended if associated pain, cellulitis, inflammation, discharge or pyrexia</td>
<td>Cultures often contaminated with colonising flora. Topical cleansing is the treatment of choice unless associated cellulitis, inflammation, pain, discharge or pyrexia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take deep swab of the ulcer</td>
<td>Common reservoir for MRSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulcer-viral</td>
<td>Swab in VTM if considering viral cause (HSV)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urethritis</td>
<td>Aptima swab for chlamydia /gonorrhea NAAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sigma Transwab for microscopy and gonococcal culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viral Haemorrhagic Fever</td>
<td>DO NOT TAKE OR SEND SPECIMENS BEFORE CONSULTING A MEDICAL MICROBIOLOGIST/ VIROLOGIST</td>
<td>Processing in specialist containment laboratory required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See Leptospirosis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whooping cough</td>
<td>ENT Sigma Transwab</td>
<td>Available on request from laboratory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Worms/ Faecal Parasites eg Ascaris (roundworm), Ancylostoma or Necator (hookworm), Taenia (tapeworm), Clonorchis (liver fluke), Trichuris, Strongyloides | Send faeces with any relevant clinical details eg. foreign travel, anaemia, eosinophilia etc
Send whole worm or segment if available in a clean, leakproof, screw capped container A small amount of physiological saline may be added to prevent desiccation |
|---|---|
| Enterobius vermicularis (thread worm) | Send an early morning sellotape slide:
Stick clear sellotape to perianal skin area, peel off and apply sticky surface to labelled microscope slide. Send slide with tape affixed in slide box |
| Mesenteric adenitis / lymphadenitis, terminal ileitis, Reactive arthritis | Faeces for Yersinia
May present as acute appendicitis
Please discuss first with a medical microbiologist |
## Appendix 3 - Referred tests

TATs given are approximate as individual reference laboratories TATs are outside of the Bristol Infection Sciences laboratory’s control. The TATs for these referred tests are for guidance only and represent average times before reports are issued from the Bristol Laboratory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referral Tests</th>
<th>Reference laboratory</th>
<th>Sample type</th>
<th>TAT</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACV Resistance</td>
<td>PHE Birmingham</td>
<td>Faece</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amoebias</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Faece, Plasma, Urine</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td>Blood: 14 days Faeces, 7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amoebic serology for invasive disease</td>
<td>London School of Tropical medicine</td>
<td>Serum, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti campylobacter titre</td>
<td>PHE Manchester</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti haemophilus titre</td>
<td>PHE Oxford (John Radcliff Headington)</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiviral assays (acyclovir, ganciclovir)</td>
<td>Virus Reference Unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Serum, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td>Toxin: 1 day Final report: 7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arboviruses &amp; Rickettsia (alphaviruses and flaviviruses, including Dengue and West Nile)</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory PHE Porton Down</td>
<td>Serum, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacterial identification</td>
<td>Colindale</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordetella pertussis</td>
<td>Atypical Pneumonia Unit (BRD) PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrelia burgdorferi (Lyme) (for confirmation of screen positive specimens)</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory PHE Porton Down</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botulinum</td>
<td>Enteric Laboratory Food Safety Microbiology Lab PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botulinum toxin serology</td>
<td>Colindale Food &amp; Water</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campylobacter Identification</td>
<td>Gastrointestinal Bacteria reference unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campylobacter serology</td>
<td>PHE Preston (NOT CSF - serum only)</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJD</td>
<td>CJD Surveillance Unit Western General Hospital</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>&gt;14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJD genetic marker (14-3-3)</td>
<td>CJD Reference Lab. Edinburgh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Available on request – testing must be arranged with laboratory prior to sending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral Tests</td>
<td>Reference laboratory</td>
<td>Sample type</td>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cysticercosis</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department 3rd Floor The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dengue Antibodies</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory Centre for Applied Microbiology &amp; Research</td>
<td>Plasma</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diphtheria (immunisation response)</td>
<td>Vaccine reference unit Manchester Medical Microbiology</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diphtheria serology</td>
<td>PHE Leeds</td>
<td>Plasma</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Coli 0157 Antibody</td>
<td>Gastrointestinal Bacteria Reference Unit</td>
<td>Plasma</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Coli 0157 Verotoxin &amp; typing</td>
<td>Gastrointestinal Bacteria Reference unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Plasma</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echinococcus serology</td>
<td>London School of Tropical medicine</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterovirus IgM</td>
<td>Microbiology dept, St Helier Hospital Carshalton</td>
<td>Urine</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erlichia (osis)</td>
<td>PHE Southampton</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fasciola serology</td>
<td>London School of Tropical medicine</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filaria CFT</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Dept 3rd Floor The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Urine</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganciclovir Resistance</td>
<td>Antiviral Sus/Ref Laboratory Health Protection Agency Birmingham Heartlands Hospital</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giardia Antibodies</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A Strep serotyping</td>
<td>PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haemophilus Antibodies</td>
<td>Vaccine reference unit Manchester Medical Microbiology</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haemophilus PCR</td>
<td>PHE Oxford</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hantavirus Antibodies</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory Centre for Applied Microbiology &amp; Research Porton Down</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBV (Staff) DNA</td>
<td>Public Health Laboratory Birmingham Heartlands Hospital</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBV DNA</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted &amp; Blood Borne Virus Lab PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral Tests</td>
<td>Reference laboratory</td>
<td>Sample type</td>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td>Plasma</td>
<td>Urine</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCV Viral Load</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted &amp; Blood Borne Virus Lab PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helicobacter pylori PCR</td>
<td>Bacteriology Reference unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis D</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted &amp; Blood Borne Virus Lab PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV Resistance Testing</td>
<td>Public Health Laboratory Birmingham Heartlands Hospital</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Herpes Virus 8</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted &amp; Blood Borne Virus Lab PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydatid</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC PCR</td>
<td>Virus Reference Laboratory Immunisation &amp; Diagnosis Unit</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legionella (Urine For Culture)</td>
<td>Legionella Reference Unit Atypical Pneumonia Unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legionella Antibodies</td>
<td>Legionella Reference Unit Atypical Pneumonia Unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legionella PCR</td>
<td>Bacteriology Reference unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leishmaniasis</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leptospirosis</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory PHE Porton</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leptospirosis Meningococcus (immunisation response)</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory Centre for Applied Microbiology &amp; Research Porton Down</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGV</td>
<td>PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyme PCR</td>
<td>Southampton PHE Lyme Disease Ref Unit</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyme serology (confirmation testing)</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory PHE Porton</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Referral Tests</td>
<td>Reference laboratory</td>
<td>Sample type</td>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningococcal Reference (PCR)</td>
<td>Meningococcal Reference Unit Manchester Medical Microbiology</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phoned report 2 days  Final report 5-7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningococcal Reference (Typing)</td>
<td>Meningococcal Reference Unit Manchester Medical Microbiology</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERs-Coronavirus</td>
<td>Birmingham PHL</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Urgent testing to be arranged prior to sending of samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microfilarias</td>
<td>London School of Tropical medicine</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mycobacterium Tuberculosis Fastrack PCR</td>
<td>National Mycobacterium Reference Laboratory</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mycobacterium Tuberculosis ID &amp; susceptibility</td>
<td>Mycobacterium Reference Laboratory Department of Medical Microbiology University Hospital of Wales</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onchocercias</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7- 14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumococcal Antibodies</td>
<td>Pneumococcal Reference Unit Manchester Medical Microbiology</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumococcal antigen</td>
<td>PHE Birmingham (serum only)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumococcal PCR</td>
<td>Pneumococcal Reference Unit Manchester Medical Microbiology</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phoned report 2 days  Final report 5-7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polio Serology</td>
<td>Enteric &amp; Respiratory Virus Laboratory PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polyoma Antibodies</td>
<td>Virus Reference Laboratory CFI (VRD)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVL toxin or gene</td>
<td>PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies (immunisation response)</td>
<td>Animal Health &amp; Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rickettsial serology</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory PHE Porton</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rift Valley Fever</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory Centre for Applied Microbiology &amp; Research Porton Down</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmonella</td>
<td>Gastrointestinal Bacteria Reference unit</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmonella &amp; shigella confirmation &amp; typing</td>
<td>Gastrointestinal Bacteria reference unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>14-28 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral Tests</td>
<td>Reference laboratory</td>
<td>Sample type</td>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>SARS</td>
<td>Enteric &amp; Respiratory Virus Laboratory PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Faeces, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schistosoma serology</td>
<td>London School of Tropical medicine</td>
<td>Plasma</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schistosomiasis (Bilharzia)</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Serum</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staph toxin</td>
<td>PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Faeces, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Staph typing (+MRSA)</td>
<td>PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strep group A surveillance</td>
<td>PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Faeces, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongyloides</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Faeces, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>SARS (immunisation response)</td>
<td>Vaccine reference unit Manchester Medical Microbiology</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma, Serum, CSF</td>
<td>28 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tetanus ID &amp; toxin</td>
<td>Foodborne Pathogens Safety Unit PHE Colindale (FSMI)</td>
<td>Plasma, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tetanus serology</td>
<td>PHE Leeds</td>
<td>Faeces, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tick ID</td>
<td>Bristol University, FAO Dr Lee</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toxocariasis</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Faeces, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<td>Toxoplasma serology</td>
<td>PHE Swansea</td>
<td>Faeces, CSF</td>
<td>7 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toxoplasmosis (confirmation/PCR)</td>
<td>NPHS Microbiology Singleton Hospital Swansea</td>
<td>Faeces, CSF (PCR only)</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trichinella CFT</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma, CSF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trypanosomal IFAT</td>
<td>London School of Tropical medicine</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trypanosomiasis</td>
<td>Clinical Parasitology Department The Hospital for Tropical Diseases</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma, CSF</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<td>Typhoid Antibodies</td>
<td>Gastrointestinal Reference Unit 61 Colindale Avenue</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<td>Typhus</td>
<td>Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory PHE Porton Down</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<td>Vibrio spp. confirmation &amp; typing</td>
<td>Gastrointestinal Bacteria reference unit PHE Colindale</td>
<td>Faeces, Plasma</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
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<td>Referral Tests</td>
<td>Reference laboratory</td>
<td>Sample type</td>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viral Haemorrhagic Fevers (e.g. Lassa, Ebola)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Faeces</td>
<td>Plasma</td>
<td>Urine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wells (disease)</td>
<td>See Leptospira</td>
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<td>West Nile Fever</td>
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<td>Whipples</td>
<td>Microbiology Great Ormond Street Hospital</td>
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<td>Widal</td>
<td>PHE Colindale</td>
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<td>Yellow Fever</td>
<td>Special Pathogens Reference Laboratory PHE Porton Down</td>
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<td>Yersinia typing</td>
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