

Pathology News



An NHS partnership providing a highly dependable, clinically assured and cost effective diagnostic pathology service



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Saghar Missaghian-Cully
Managing Director

Dear colleague, as always, the aim of this newsletter is to keep you up to date with service developments and improvements taking place in pathology both operationally and clinically.

Our clinical director Dr Aodhan Breathnach will be standing down from his role. Aodhan served in his role for four years and was instrumental in helping SWLP through its transition programme.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Aodhan for his contribution and dedication to SWLP. He has been a key member of the team since its inception and his knowledge and experience have been invaluable both to me and the organisation. Aodhan will continue in his role as Consultant Microbiologist based at St George's. We are currently recruiting to this post. Aodhan will continue in post until we have a replacement.

We are continuing to make service improvements. One of the ways of delivering a more consistent service to you, and ultimately to patients, is to ensure that all GPs are using the same analysers for tests and the same collection devices. By September all our sites will be using the same analysers and collection devices for Gonorrhoea and Chlamydia tests. These changes reflect an improvement in service – we will be using the most up to date technology to process these tests as well as streamlining the consumables process.

GPs in Wandsworth have been able to attend education sessions and we have had excellent feedback about these events. We have included information about these sessions below but we would also like to undertake more of these kind of events with GPs in Croydon and Kingston. Once we have further information about these sessions we will let you know.

We want you to continue using our website as the primary place for any information you may need about our services. We are pleased to report that we now have a comprehensive test database providing you with relevant information on tests, samples, containers and turnaround times all in one place. This can be accessed from our website www.swlpath.nhs.uk - more information below about the new tests database.

We always welcome feedback - if you have anything you would like to share with us please email us at stgh-tr.SWLPcomms@nhs.net

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN SWLP

New Test Database

The SWLP new test database can now be accessed from the front page of the website. (<http://www.swlpath.nhs.uk/>). The database provides information on pathology tests for all the disciplines including container use, collection conditions and a picture of the container that should be used for the test.

You can search for tests via test sample type (eg blood, urine, CSF), by department/discipline or by test name (put the test name into the search by keyword box).

If you have any queries about any of the tests please contact us at <mailto:stgh-tr.SWLPComms@nhs.net>



Access the test database by going to the website www.swlpath.nhs.uk. Click on the box next to the red arrow 'Access the test database'.



The test homepage displays the tests in A-Z format. If you would like to search via sample type, discipline or by the name of the test use the boxes shown with red arrows.

Microbiology - new black lidded charcoal swabs instead of blue



We are now depleting stocks of the traditional blue lidded transport swabs and replacing them with black lidded charcoal swabs (see picture on the left).

This change will improve the quality of the specimen - charcoal ensures better survival rates of the more fastidious bacteria. We will continue to process the blue swabs, going forward we will be sending black lidded swabs as your orders come through.

Croydon GPs

Semen Analysis - for infertility and post-vasectomy

There is now a separate sample bag and instruction leaflet for patients from Croydon Hospital. These must be ordered from the pathology consumables website (located under Pathology/Forms bags section). If you are a GP from Croydon please click on the semen analysis item that says 'Croydon GPs only'.

Croydon GPs

Ordering pathology consumables is now through SWLP website

From Monday 11 September you will no longer be able to order pathology consumables through ICE. All consumables must be ordered through the SWLP pathology consumables website. If you do not have your access details please contact philip.graham@stgeorges.nhs.uk

Croydon GPs

New collection devices for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea

Microbiology is now rolling out the next generation of molecular equipment paving the way for improved diagnostic testing for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea testing. There will be a new supply of collection devices associated with the new equipment.

Week beginning Monday 21 August

The old collection devices were collected from your surgery by ERS Medical **week beginning**

Monday 21 August and at the same time you were given a supply of the new collection devices.

From Monday 11 September samples using the old collection devices will not be accepted.

Instruction guides

There are also short guides for collecting and transporting samples which can be downloaded from the pathology consumables site.

Reordering new supplies

If you need to order more supplies of the new collection devices please use the SWLP consumables website. Please do not use ICE to order consumables. If you need access to SWLP pathology consumables site please contact philip.graham@stgeorges.nhs.uk

The benefits of the new tests

The Cobas® 6800 CT/NG test uses real-time PCR to test Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea simultaneously in the same sample, with highly accurate results, rapid turnaround time, and minimal hands-on time. The test has unique quality control measures built in to ensure confidence in patient results reported.

The test:

- Reduces the risk of false positive results.
- Uses an internal control to minimize false negative results due to inhibition.
- Delivers robust performance with accurate detection of two independent Chlamydia DNA targets and two highly conserved Gonorrhoea DNA sequence variations.
- Provides clear, unambiguous results.

Pictures of old and new collection devices

Pathology request, sample labelling and sample rejection

Providing the correct, patient identifiable information on requests and related specimens is very important from a patient safety perspective. Several of the professional bodies associated with pathology have produced guidelines indicating how requests and specimens should be identified.

All of them require:

- Patient number (NHS or hospital)
- The first and family name
- Date of birth

As most of you use electronic ordering, this information will be automatically included on the label, if it is printed correctly.

The SWLP Request and Specimen Labelling policy is based on these guidelines and provides details on the information you need to label your requests and specimens correctly.

Please read this, this is a very important part of ensuring the best use of pathology as incorrect labelling is currently a major issue. In July the laboratory at St George's received

150 samples which had to be rejected due to poor labelling.

From **Sunday 1 October 2017** this policy will be strictly implemented. If samples or requests are received without ALL of the required information, which are legible, requests will not be accepted and tests not performed.

Please cascade this message to all staff completing request forms or labelling any pathology samples, and equally importantly, to patients who will be labelling their own samples.

Request and Sample Labelling Policy - Version 2.0

Cytology - Acceptance of Cervical Screening Samples

Samples will be rejected by the laboratory if they are out of programme samples. Please note the following guidance about which samples are classified as out of programme.

Samples from **women under 25 years of age**, who have not been invited by the programme, will be classed as out of programme if they have been taken earlier than 6 months before the woman's 25th birthday.

However, tests should be accepted from women under 25 who are:

- on routine recall after previously being tested at 20 years in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland
- from private healthcare who are being followed up for previous abnormal cytology
- being followed up after having had an incidental biopsy showing cervical glandular intraepithelial neoplasia (CGIN) but have had no prior cytology

Samples from **women 65 years of age and over** will be classed as out of programme unless:

- the woman has never had a cervical screening test and now requests one (which should be indicated by the sample taker on the request form)
 - if the woman did not attend for her last invitation when aged 60 or over and now wishes to have that final test
 - if the woman's last 3 tests included an abnormal result and/or she is still in surveillance or follow up following treatment for CIN
-

Key Performance Indicators

We will now be providing you with key performance indicators for the following tests:

- Full Blood Count
- Potassium
- Thyroid Stimulating Hormone
- Urine Microscopy and Screen

We process hundreds of tests but these are some of the most frequently requested tests processed in our laboratories. Full Blood Count and Potassium samples from GPs are all processed at St George's Hospital.

Key performance Indicators - January - July 2017



Results Line - Reminder

The new telephone number for results and enquiries is now available for all GPs.

You can obtain results for Clinical Blood Sciences (Chemistry, Haematology and Immunology) and Microbiology.

0208 725 5468

Contact Us

If you wish to contact us with regards to any aspect of our service, you can contact us using the email address below. We will ensure it is logged, investigated and resolved.

We are keen to work with all those using our services to ensure our service meets your requirements and expectations.

Please use our secure NHS.net email address to raise any specific points as this will help us address the details at individual patient level.

Please provide the following information:

- Patient's NHS number
- Date of test
- Name of test

- The name of your GP surgery

Email address: stgh-tr.SWLPcomms@nhs.net

There are also [contact telephone numbers](#) on our website for clinical advice, enquiries and transport.

CLINICAL UPDATES

Education Sessions for GPs in Wandsworth

Wandsworth CCG have been working with clinical colleagues at SWLP to run education sessions for GPs.

Immunology

In April, Dr Jo Sheldon, Clinical lead for Immunology, ran a number of sessions for GPs about the Immunology services provided by SWLP. The GPs decided which aspects of Immunology they wanted to hear about and as well as highlighting which tests should be done in particular situations, we also discussed some of the limitations of Immunology testing and how to avoid excessive testing.

Anti-nuclear antibody testing is always a popular topic so the CCG did a short video with Dr Sheldon: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJQyaf0Xu2s&feature=youtu.be>



Hormones and Calprotectin

Drs Frances Boa and Les Perry ran a number of education sessions for GPs on endocrine glands and hormones and faecal calprotectin. The feedback received from the education session was excellent:

Please summarise what you found useful:

- Both speakers and topics hit the right levels
- Excellent pitch, excellent speakers
- Very informative and useful to primary care
- Found new FPC guidelines useful
- Excellent content, engaging and well pitched
- Guidelines for faecal calprotectin, testosterone testing when appropriate
- Knowledgeable, interactive, makes pathology make sense!

Will what you have learnt this session that will help in the future?

- New guidelines for faecal calprotectin
- Use of iaux male ED, calprotectin
- Especially timing of testosterone bloods.

GPs were also provided with 'Quick Guides' -
click on the link below for Thyroid Function Test guide.

[Thyroid Function Test - Quick Guide](#)

Trauma Education Day

In May, a packed audience of 230 delegates from 54 trusts joined consultant haematologist, Dr James Uprichard and his transfusion team for a trauma and haematology education day which SGH hosted on behalf of the London and South East Trauma and Haematology Group.

This was the second such event at St George's, following the success of the trauma and haematology education day in May 2016. The delegates who had travelled from all over the country represented multiple professions including transfusion practitioners, laboratory scientists, emergency department physicians, nurses, haematologists and anaesthetists. The day was principally aimed at educating staff at trauma units which feed into major trauma centres, like the one at St George's.

The youngest presenters were James Innes and Suvetha Kugendra biomedical support workers in SWLP's Emergency Department hot lab where they carry out tests on urgent blood samples from emergency patients. The existence of the hot lab ensures that there is a minimal delay between sending blood tests and receiving the results, improving the efficiency in the flow of patients through the emergency department.

Dr Uprichard commented: "The talks highlighted the importance of co-ordinated, multidisciplinary input for optimising transfusion needs for trauma patients. We were delighted that 230 delegates attended this event, which could not have happened without the months of hard work and organisation from Kelly Feane and the rest of our transfusion team."

One of the speakers, Malcolm Robinson, tweeted after the event: "It was a fantastic day with great presentations, well done to my fellow speakers: learned a great deal!"



Dr James Uprichard (far left) with presenters.



The packed lecture theatre

