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Questions or comments?

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If you have any requests for topics you'd like to see in future newsletters, please let us know...

EPA LAB NEWS

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When anyone comes for a tour around the NNUH blood science laboratory they are amazed at the amount of instrumentation that we have and the number of robots working in the lab. There is a hopper that all of the samples are placed in, that sorts them and puts them onto a tracked system for analysis. Many samples, after the initial checking, are not touched or seen by anyone...

It's also impressive to note that the blood science laboratory in Norwich has reached a few milestones; last year we processed over a million FBCs and the same number of U&Es. The labs at JPUH and QEHL are not as large, but still, there is a lot of work going through their analysers. Microbiology numbers have reduced since the Covid pandemic times, due to less covid testing, but they still have some impressive workload numbers too.

If anyone wants a trip around any of the four EPA laboratories please contact us and we'll arrange a tour...

Nigel Roberts

Newsletter Spotlight

9am CORTISOL COMMENT

If you wish to measure cortisol in a patient, the sample should be taken before, or as close as possible to, 9am. In addition, in collaboration with our Endocrinology colleagues, we recently changed the interpretive comment we attach to cortisol results. The comment now states:

Cortisol interpretation can only be made on a 9am sample.

A 9am cortisol >350 nmol/L makes adrenal insufficiency unlikely, but may not be sufficient in severe illness. Values <350 nmol/L should be interpreted in light of the patients' likelihood of adrenal insufficiency.

If adrenal insufficiency is not one of the likely diagnoses for your patient, consider other factors that may be influencing the cortisol result, before referring for synacthen testing. A list of common confounders is also attached to the report.

SPECIALIST TESTS

Please note that request forms with the following message on the top of the form require immediate processing and samples should not be collected in primary care locations without seeking guidance from the laboratory first...

SPECIALIST TEST

Requires Immediate Processing take to LAB IMMEDIATELY

NEW ONLINE APPOINTMENT BOOKING FOR ANDROLOGY SERVICE

From Friday 12th May 2023 the Andrology service launched a new online appointment booking service where patients can book their appointment for a fertility or post vasectomy semen analysis test online. This service improvement enables patients to gain better access to the service and appointment booking options, via accessing a website provided to them on the WEB ICE request form that they obtain from their GP/Clinician.

The direct link to the online appointment booking system is: [Andrology streaming form - Formstack](https://drdoctor-nnuh.formstack.com/forms/andrologyservice) (<https://drdoctor-nnuh.formstack.com/forms/andrologyservice>)



Patients can also access the link to the online appointment booking system and a QR code via the Eastern Pathology Alliance (EPA) website <https://www.easternpathologyalliance.nhs.uk/departments/andrology/> and also the NNUH and QEHL websites.

The QR code is also provided on the patient information leaflet that you should print and give directly to the patient with every new request.

SCAN HERE

If a patient is unable to access the online appointment booking system, they can get someone else to book an appointment on their behalf or contact the laboratory office on 01603 646524.

All service information and patient information leaflets can be found on the EPA website at <https://www.easternpathologyalliance.nhs.uk/departments/andrology/>

CENTRALISATION OF DIAGNOSTIC FERTILITY AND POST VASECTOMY INVESTIGATION SERVICES AT NNUH

A new patient facility for onsite sample production for fertility investigations is now live at the NNUH and the QEHL. The implementation of this new facility for Andrology Patients improves sample integrity and the reliability of results. All fertility investigations are time dependent due to motility of sperm cell degradation over time. The facility removes the time pressure from patients that live a distance from the hospital having to previously deliver samples produced at home within a specific timeframe. The new facility is a key requirement for an accredited Andrology service and significantly improves patient experience and ensures safety is considered.

Reason	Change	Patient Benefit
Andrology service within Norfolk & Waveney is not accredited	A new onsite Production room facility has been implemented and resourced at the NNUH and also the QEHL	Meeting Legislative requirement and patient expectations
It is essential that an onsite facility for sample production is available to gain accreditation status as per legislative requirement	Andrology service at JPUH has been re-located to NNUH	Improves sample integrity <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves reliability of results thereforeReduces the number of repeat analyses required from samples being tested at more than 60 minutes post collection
Ensures sample integrity is maintained and improves the reliability of results as tests are time dependant	Additional appointment availability has been created at NNUH	Reduces the stress that patients experience from delivering samples to the laboratory under time pressure ensuring samples are kept at a specific temperature
JPUH does not have an onsite production room facility and does not have capacity or resources to implement one		Appointments more accessible for those patients that have work commitments

PATIENTS NO LONGER REGISTERED AT YOUR PRACTICE

We are receiving a number of requests from GP practices asking that we forward on results that have been sent to them when a patient has changed practices after they have generated a request.

Please be aware that our responsibility is to send reports back to the location stated on the original request form, and we are unable to investigate the new surgery that a patient has moved to on your behalf.

Please establish a process within your practice that when a patient moves surgeries the new GP is informed of any outstanding test requests or reports. The new GP will be able to download the results directly from ICE.

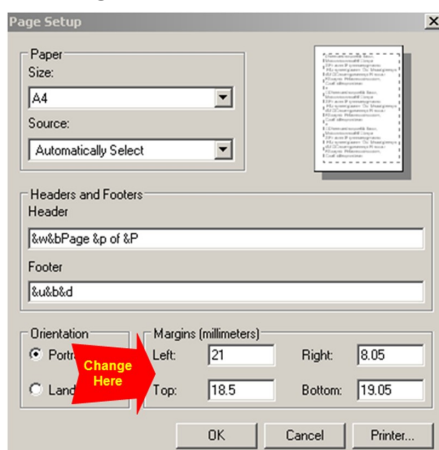
Alternatively you could email the new GP yourselves when you receive reports for an ex-patient, informing them that there are results available for their viewing on ICE.

Please do not return results to the laboratory unless they were sent to you in error, in which case we will be happy to investigate and ensure that the reports are forwarded on to the correct location.

Thank you.

CHANGING INTERNET EXPLORER MARGINS FOR ALL ICE FORMS

Open [Internet Explorer](#), click on [File](#) and select [Page Setup](#) then set the margins as below...



If you don't see the File menu you will see a small [printer](#) icon on the page and if you click on the [arrow](#) next to it you will see [Page Setup...](#) on the drop down menu. Select this and it displays a box as above. Make the same changes and [OK](#)

If you are not allowed to change the margins then you will have to contact your usual IT helpdesk who will be able to do this for you.

The NNUH IT department cannot change the margins for you as it is outside of their control.