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Questions or comments?

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Inside this issue...

Troponin Requests & ACS	1
Pathology Podcast	1
Haematology GP Info Sheets	1
LMCT Reports & Credit Tests	2
ICE Request Forms	2
NNUH Phlebo Appointments	2
EMED: Collection of Samples	3
Post Vasectomy Semen Analysis (PVSA) Patient Info Leaflet	3-4
Requesting FH Test	5



Eastern Pathology Alliance



www.easternpathologyalliance.nhs.uk

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

EPA LAB NEWS

Currently there is a big spot light on NHS finances, and, within pathology, this comes back to the suitability of testing. Are these tests necessary for diagnosis? Are all results actively being reviewed? Were these test done recently so don't require repeating so soon? All questions we are investigating with the local ICB via our new Diagnostic Stewardship and User Group...

With repeat testing there are a number of cases where tests close to the edge of the 'normal' range are being repeated. In the lab, we know that if you repeat a test x10 you won't always get the exact same result. When setting up tests we measure these values to ensure that they are within acceptable limits. Results close to edge of the normal range don't need to be repeated, unless there are other factors, as these results won't change.

Newsletter Spotlight

Nigel Roberts

TROPONIN REQUESTS IN THE COMMUNITY & ACUTE CORONARY SYNDROME (ACS)

Although High Sensitivity Troponin I (hs-TnI) can be used in the investigation of other disorders, it is primarily intended for Acute Coronary Syndrome (ACS). Therefore, this test is treated within the laboratory as an urgent request, with strict phoning protocols to ensure that no patient is missed. Patients presenting with ACS must also be treated with high urgency to ensure best outcomes.

Two clinical incidents have recently been reported, with elevated Troponin results requested in the Community and not urgently transported to the lab and actioned. **As a consequence, in agreement with NWICB and Cardiology, troponin cannot be requested within Primary Care.**

There may be exceptional circumstances for this request in a Community setting, in which case please contact the duty biochemist (via NNUH switchboard – 01603 286286) to discuss, but any patient with a suspected ACS should be referred to the Rapid Access Chest Pain Clinic or the Emergency Department for urgent assessment as appropriate.

PATHOLOGY PODCAST: BEHIND THE HOSPITAL CURTAIN...



Consultant Clinical Biochemist Dr Allison Chipchase gives an overview of the types of tests carried out and how the team works under pressure to process thousands of samples every day.

With around 70% of all diagnoses relying on some sort of pathology result, it's an eye-opening conversation...

Listen now on [Spotify](#) or [Apple Podcasts](#)

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/7IU1zJDtsHHfm010cSEI98>

<https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/pathology-in-our-labs/id1695701946?i=1000686157725>

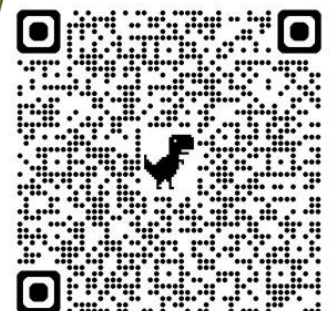
HAEMATOLOGY GP INFORMATION SHEETS

Haematology Advice Leaflets for GPs can be found on the Knowledge NoW website for many of the topics that our colleagues in Primary Care could need specialist advice for. (<https://nwknowledgenow.nhs.uk>)

They cover topics such as raised ferritin results, macrocytosis, neutropenia, lymphocytosis, paraproteins, thrombocytosis, polycythaemia and venous thromboembolism management.

The leaflets can be found by scanning this QR code or in the Clinical Information>Diagnostics>Haematology area of the website.

([Haematology Advice Leaflets for GPs \(NNUH\) - Knowledge NoW](#))



LMCT REPORTS and CREDIT TESTS

When EPA receives a sample that we are unable to process we send out a report labelled 'Credit Test'. This may be because the sample type was incorrect for the test requested; it was unlabelled or didn't match the request form; or because the sample wasn't delivered quickly enough to the laboratory and was therefore unsuitable for processing.

Recently, there was an incident which led to a patient complaint, because a test was not able to be processed. The lab communicated this issue to the requestor via a 'Credit Test' report, but, as it was not recognised by the primary care reception team or GP viewing the results, it was not picked up on and actioned in a timely manner. This led to a delay in arranging a repeat sample from the patient and therefore, a delay in their diagnostic pathway.

Please ensure you read any 'Credit Test' reports carefully as there are usually actions to be taken following their issue.

ICE REQUEST FORMS

DO NOT HIJACK, AMEND, REPRINT OR PHOTOCOPY ICE REQUEST FORMS

You must not amend an ICE request once it has been completed, or reprint a form that has already been used.

Although the system will allow you to amend your request and the printed form will look as if the amendment has been accepted, only the original information is downloaded within the barcode so **you will not receive the additional tests you have asked for.**

If you have missed a test in your original request, you must delete the original request from ICE and submit a completely new one. If you generate a request in error too, please also remember to delete it from ICE. This ensures that another user cannot hijack your incorrect request and use it to request tests under your name/location instead of generating their own request.

We have seen a couple of cases of this recently!

Please also **do not produce multiple copies, reprint or photocopy request forms from ICE** for multiple use. Each request form contains a unique number which can only be used by the laboratory once. Each time a patient needs to be bled a completely new request must be made in ICE.

Thank you.

NNUH PHLEBOTOMY APPOINTMENTS

Book blood tests at a time to suit you

PLEASE NOTE PHLEBOTOMY CLINICS AT THE NORFOLK & NORWICH UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL ARE

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

Over 16's Blood Tests (East Outpatients)

<https://my.drdoctor.co.uk/clinic/phlebnnuh>

Children's Blood Tests (West Outpatients)

<https://my.drdoctor.co.uk/clinic/nnuhchildrenbloodclinic>

APPOINTMENTS ARE AVAILABLE :

MONDAY - FRIDAY

08:30 - 16:45

(Excluding Bank Holidays)

Please only call the department on 01603 286921 if you are unable to book online or have a special request required for your child.



EMED: COLLECTION OF SAMPLES FROM PRIMARY CARE

As you may be aware, the courier service used by Eastern Pathology Alliance and Pharmacy was transferred from the previous supplier ISS to EMED on 1st April 2024. EMED have been working hard to improve the service for primary care, pharmacy and the laboratories culminating in the new route schedule going live in November 2024.

To enable smooth collections please ensure that the following processes are followed:

- Please ensure that samples are placed in the correct secondary bag. Samples placed in the incorrect bag will be delivered to the incorrect laboratory resulting in delayed reporting of results
- Please ensure that all samples are ready for collection 10 minutes prior to the specified EMED arrival time with all racks and samples placed in the correct secondary bags
- Bags must be sealed by clinical team or allocated surgery staff. The EMED drivers are not clinically trained so please do not hand over any unsealed bags or ask drivers to place additional specimens into the secondary bags

If you have any questions or queries, please contact: george.bailey@nnuh.nhs.uk

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Tel: (01603) 646651

POST VASECTOMY SEMEN ANALYSIS (PVSA) - PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Please find overleaf & attached a new Patient Information Leaflet outlining details for Post Vasectomy Semen Analysis (PVSA).



The Laboratory staff and Consultant Urologist Mr Omar Al Kadhi (EPA Andrology Clinical Lead) have created this new leaflet in the hope that it helps patients to be better informed of the appointment booking procedure, and the sample requirements for the analysis.

We have unfortunately been experiencing increased numbers of patients that have not adhered to the required 2-7 day abstinence period. This means **no ejaculation/sexual activity for 2 full days before their appointment**, but they do need to have ejaculated once within the 5 days before that. Failure to adhere to these requirements leads to rejected samples, unnecessary repeat testing and inconvenience to both the patient and the laboratory.

All PVSA samples where the abstinence period has not been met will be rejected and a new request will need to be generated.

We also believe patients are being caught out by the long appointment waiting list, therefore we are advising them to book their semen analysis for 12 weeks' time soon after their procedure to avoid any further delay.

We would greatly appreciate this leaflet being distributed to patients at the Vasectomy procedure appointment so that we can pass on the necessary information as soon as possible in the process.

All information regarding the Andrology service can be found on the EPA Website:

<https://www.easternpathologyalliance.nhs.uk/departments/andrology/>

EPA Andrology

Teams: [Contact me on Teams](#)

Email: EPAAndrologyLab@nnuh.nhs.uk

Tel: 01603 289589 ext 5589 Mon-Fri 08:15-16:15 (Wed 08:00-16:00)

PTO



POST-VASECTOMY SEMEN ANALYSIS – POST PROCEDURE INFORMATION

Sample Requirements

To ensure accurate and reliable results, please follow the guidelines below:

1. Timing of Your Sample:

- Your semen analysis should take place at least **12 weeks after your vasectomy**.
- It is also important that at least **20 ejaculations have occurred since your procedure**.

2. Booking Your Appointment:

- We recommend booking your semen analysis appointment as soon as possible after your vasectomy, ideally for 12 weeks later. There is currently high demand for appointments, so booking early helps avoid delays.

3. Producing Your Sample:

- We strongly advise producing your sample on-site at the hospital. This helps meet strict testing criteria. If your sample is tested more than 1 hour after collection, results may be invalid, and the test may need to be repeated.

4. Important: Before Producing Your Sample:

- Please follow an abstinence period of 2 -7 days before your sample is tested. This means **no ejaculation/sexual activity for 2 full days before your appointment**, but you need to have ejaculated once within the 5 days before that.
- Collect the entire ejaculate into the provided sample container.
- Bring your request form with you to your appointment.

5. Please Note:

Unfortunately, we will not be able to test your sample if:

- The abstinence period of 2 -7 days is not followed (**no less than 2 days and no more than 7 days**).
- Your appointment is booked before the 12-week post-vasectomy mark.
- The sample provided is incomplete.
- You arrive with a sample but do not have an appointment.
- You arrive to produce a sample on-site without pre-booking the correct type of appointment.
- You arrive more than 15 minutes late to your appointment.

How to Book Your Semen Analysis Appointment Online

Appointments are available at the following locations:

- **The Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH)** Mon- Fri between 8:15-14:15
- **The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) Kings Lynn** Tues-Thurs between 08:30-14:30

To book your appointment:

- Visit: <https://drdoctor-nnuh.formstack.com/forms/andrologyservice>
- Or scan the **QR code** provided



SCAN HERE

***Please read all the information and questions carefully when booking to help ensure your appointment runs smoothly* If you need to cancel your appointment please call the laboratory on 01603 646524.**

Additional Resources

For more detailed information, please refer to the downloadable patient leaflets on the Andrology Department Details Page of the Eastern Pathology Alliance website:

<https://www.easternpathologyalliance.nhs.uk/departments/andrology/>

HOW TO REQUEST GENETICS FOR FAMILIAL HYPERCHOLESTEROLAEMIA (FH)

Cambridge Genetics Lab have authorised FH Genetics in primary care. Please see below the process if you wish to request a test.

1. Request the FH test on ICE as per instructions below, specific to your location.
2. A pop-up box¹ will appear informing you that you must select the "More Info" button which will generate the Cambridge University Hospital (CUH) Test Order Form for FH genetics². The form will open up automatically in your browser. If this fails to open [East_GLH_FH_Test_Order_Form_ADOBE_GH-RI-FRM-3_v1_so3CgTd.pdf](#) (backup-[cuh-production.s3.amazonaws.com](#)) can be used.
3. Print and complete the CUH Test Order Form.
4. Continue to generate and print the ICE request form as normal.
5. Staple the ICE request form AND the CUH Test Order Form together and send in specimen collection bag with one purple top EDTA blood sample to NNUH. **If both request forms are not received or the wrong blood bottle is used, the sample will not be processed and the patient will need another sample to be taken.**

****Note – for samples taken in Primary Care, please DO NOT put the sample in the indexer rack****

If you have any questions or issues with the link, please email fhassessment@nuh.nhs.uk

Practices serving NNUH View

Practices serving QEH View

Practices serving JPUH View

Pop-up box¹

Request Options-- Web page Dialogue

Familial hypercholesterolaemia genetics

PLEASE NOTE

In order to request the FH genetics test, you must print and complete the CUH Form by pressing the "More Info.." button and then attach the completed CUH Form to the ICE Request Form, otherwise the sample will NOT be processed.

[More Info...](#)

Test Order Form for FH genetics²

NHS
East Genomic Laboratory Hub

PATIENT DETAILS (or address label)	ORDERING CLINICIAN INFORMATION
NHS NO.*	SUBMITTER HOSPITAL OR GP SURGERY*
HOSPITAL NO.	RESPONSIBLE CLINICIAN*
FAMILY NO.	CONTACT EMAIL
SURNAME*	CONTACT PHONE
FORENAME(S)*	REPORT TO EMAIL*
DATE OF BIRTH*	<small>NHS.net or DGB199 secure email required for reporting</small>
POSTCODE*	
ETHNICITY <small>(2) Not Stated</small>	MANDATORY FIELDS
SEX* <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Other	

SPECIMENS <https://www.eastgenomics.nhs.uk/for-healthcare-professionals/genomic-tests/sample-requirements/>

Send one specimen type Blood (EDTA) Saliva Risk of infection

COLLECTION DATE: _____

PREPARED BY (PRINT NAME): _____

GENOMIC TEST REQUIRED	FH CASCADE TESTING
<input type="checkbox"/> FH DIAGNOSTIC TESTING (R134) Provide details of the patient: LDL CHOLESTEROL (actual or estimated): _____ mmol/L	<input type="checkbox"/> FH CASCADE TESTING Provide details of the index patient and the family FH genetic variant: INDEX PATIENT NAME: _____ INDEX PATIENT D.O.B: _____ GENETIC VARIANT: _____
Additional clinical details: Provide details for ONE of the following: SIMON BROOME SCORE FH WALES SCORE LUTD SCORE Possible Define	<small>A copy of the index patient's genetic report should also be provided</small>

CONSENT DISCUSSION WITH PATIENT

CONSENT DISCUSSION FOR FAMILIAL HYPERCHOLESTEROLAEMIA GENETIC TESTING

The FH test will look for genetic variants in only the genes known to cause FH.
The FH test may not identify a genetic cause of FH. This does not exclude a diagnosis of FH.
The FH test results may be uncertain and change over time.
The FH test results may have implications for other family members.

THIS PATIENT AGREES TO BE CONTACTED ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE PART IN RESEARCH YES NO

Research studies may lead to improvements in the diagnosis and treatment of Familial Hypercholesterolaemia, high lipid levels and cardiovascular disease.
If contacted, the patient is under no obligation to take part in any research study.
This decision will not affect the care this patient or their family will receive.

Send completed form and specimen to your usual local pathology department or by courier or L14 check point to:
Cambridge Genomics Laboratory, Box 143, Cambridge University Hospital Foundation Trust, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ.

Eastern Pathology Alliance

www.easternpathologyalliance.nhs.uk

Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital, Level 1, East Block
Colney Lane, Norwich, Norfolk, NR4 7UY

