

## **Making changes to increase capacity for COVID-19 testing.**

Dear colleague,

Thank you for your continued support and help in these challenging times.

I am writing to let you know that due to the need to provide rapid testing for COVID-19, we have to reduce some of the routine sample types we currently test. This is in line with the recommendations of the Royal College of Pathologists and Professional Bodies (IBMS, ACP and ACB). Your help and support in not sending the following sample types from Monday 25 January would be much appreciated. This change in practice will be in place for an initial two-week period and it will be reviewed by senior colleagues after this time.

### **Faeces Samples for:**

- Routine culture, except in children with bloody diarrhoea, query haemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), in cases of a strongly suspected outbreak or foreign travel with risk of enteric fever.
- Testing for *C. difficile* will continue as normal at both sites.

### **Urine Samples for:**

- GP's with uncomplicated UTIs and no evidence of treatment failures

### **HVS/LVS/Cx Samples for:**

- Uncomplicated discharge
- Superficial infections, other than children < 10, who are not post-operative

### **Chlamydia for:**

- All samples other than from inpatients, pregnant patients or eye swabs

### **Wounds for:**

- Superficial wound samples including ulcers from GP and community patients excepting those from the Diabetic Foot Clinic
- Ear swabs with Otitis Externa except those from ENT patients

### **Blood Samples for;**

- Occupational health screens for staff not working in front line NHS work

### **Respiratory for:**

- Nose swabs,
- Neonatal baby screens **will** be tested.

### **Mycology Samples**

- No dermatophyte samples will be processed
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We would like to thank you in advance for your co-operation and patience. If you have any queries please call 01206-747374 for Colchester and 01473-703012 for Ipswich.

Yours faithfully

Dr Luke Bedford

Consultant Microbiologist and Infection Control.