

Clinical Biochemistry News – City Hospital

No. 46 City Laboratory

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Vitamin D Method ... Temporary Change in Method

We would like to inform you that due to problems with the supply of Nichols Institute 25-hydroxy vitamin D reagents we have reverted to our previous radio immunoassay for 25-hydroxy vitamin D.

The IDS RIA was our previous platform for this assay. In Spring 2005 when we changed methods we showed a good correlation between these two Vitamin D methods and indeed we did not need to change our reference intervals when we moved to the non-isotopic method. Therefore, while we are informing you of this temporary change in methodology underlying our service, **there is no need to change any reference intervals on your computer system.** This change comes into force for all samples that are reported by us after 17 February.

Electronic Return of Results

During 2006 we are working on a pilot project to look at the electronic return of results back to referring laboratories. We are now keen to identify a group of 10 of our TPMT service users who would be interested in piloting this with us. Results may be returned either by direct host-to-host transfer, transmitted PDF files or access to secure internet sites. This project will require installation of some client software on your computer. If you are interested in helping us with this project contact: jonathan.berg@swbh.nhs.uk

Improvements to the TPMT Assay – April 2006

We have been undertaking an extensive research study in the Department looking at a modified version of our TPMT activity method. From 1 April 2006 we intend to change to a method based on the analysis of whole blood TPMT activity. This will have slightly different reference intervals but offers several advantages including:

- Reduced pre-analytical treatment with the primary tube being used directly in the assay minimising potential for sample mismatches.
- Sample integrity is maintained and this opens up the possibility of DNA analysis on selected samples if required.
- The assay exhibits better reproducibility using whole blood.
- Discrimination between TPMT wild type and heterozygote individuals is the same as the present method.

Our new assay has been fully evaluated against the existing method and genotyping with over 400 patient samples. We will summarise this data to you in our March Newsletter.

At this stage we would like to hear from anyone who is unhappy with this proposed change. In particular this could include laboratories who have been referring samples to us that are part of ongoing research studies. Please comment to: loretta.ford@swbh.nhs.uk