

## MICROBIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

### PROCEDURE FOR VERBAL REQUESTS FOR TESTS

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#### **1. Introduction**

The laboratory operates a strict protocol for identification of patients and their samples before requests for testing are accepted. A small proportion of tests are requested verbally by users which are add – on tests for samples which have already been received in the laboratory for other tests

The laboratory accepts that these requests are often necessary in the interest of patient treatment and so has put in place a procedure to be followed to ensure patient/ sample identity is still clearly defined.

#### **2. Protocol**

Staff receiving verbal requests for tests will require the following details:

- Name of requestor ( as with all samples only Medically qualified staff or Nursing staff can request tests)
- Location of requestor and contact number/ bleep number
- Name/ number of person to whom result should be telephoned if required
- Name of patient ( surname and forename)
- Date of Birth
- NHS or Hospital number
- Test required and any additional clinical information

#### **3. Time limits for requesting add- on tests**

Specimens are retained in the laboratory for a defined length of time in line with guidance from Royal College of Pathologists. Adding tests to specimens which have already been received therefore is time limited. Specimens sent for bacteriological culture may deteriorate over time. If the delay to add -on test is greater than 48 hours after the specimen has been received in the laboratory it is preferable to take another sample if possible.

Below are the laboratory sample retention periods

Swabs for culture	5 days
Tissues/ Fluids/ CSF for culture	14 days
Urines for culture	3 days
Serology bloods	3 months
Antenatal bloods	2 years
Donor bloods	10 years
Faecal samples for molecular tests	1 month
Bloods for Molecular tests	1 year