



Briefing Note 2021/072

Date 27 October 2021

Event Changes to Reference Services (at Colindale) and Specialist Microbiology Services during the enhanced COVID-19 incident - update

Notified by Reference Services Division (BRD and VRD, Colindale),
Clinical Laboratory Network and NHS Liaison Division,
Food, Water and Environmental Microbiology Services

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NIERP Level
N/A

Incident Lead
N/A

Background and Interpretation:

Briefing note [BN2020/011](#) described changes to the services offered by PHE's reference laboratories in order to enable them to provide critical support to our COVID-19 diagnostic services and ensure business continuity for other critical services. These changes included some suspension of services or extended turnaround times.

Although we are moving to greater normality, some services continue to be affected by continuing prioritisation of COVID-19 work, including our whole genome sequencing services of non-COVID pathogens.

Existing clinical and reference service users will be advised of changes that affect specific services using notifications published through the e-Lab reporting system. Food Water and Environmental Microbiology Service users will be contacted directly about any changes.

To register to receive these updates by email please visit <https://phe-elab.phe.org.uk/Registration/UserDetails>.

For any enquiries regarding the status of specific tests, please refer to the service-specific contacts listed in the [BRD User Manual](#) for bacteriological tests and [VRD User Manual](#) or virological tests, or contact the General Office on Telephone: 020 8327 7787 (staffed 9am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday).

For Food Water and Environmental Microbiology Services, please contact FWElabs@phe.gov.uk.



UK Health Security Agency

Our laboratory teams continue to work closely with UKAS and our ISO 15189 and ISO 17025 accreditations continue to be maintained. Participation in IQA and EQA schemes has been maintained for all active tests.

Quality assurance enquiries can be directed to the Quality Assurance Managers (contact details are published in the departmental user manuals for the clinical and reference laboratories available through the links above).

Implications for UKHSA Regions

N/A

Implications for UKHSA sites and services

UKHSA Microbiologists to cascade to NHS Microbiology teams

NHS laboratories should note the above communication. Further details of clinical and reference laboratory services, contacts and user manuals are available on <https://www.gov.uk/topic/health-protection/services>

FW&E Microbiologists to cascade to relevant Local Authority teams

Recommendations to UKHSA Regions

N/A

Recommendations to UKHSA sites and services

N/A

Implications and recommendations for local authorities

N/A

References/ Sources of information

N/A
