



Molecular testing for Enteric Pathogens: Reagent Supply Issues

Please note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we currently have problems in securing reagents for molecular/PCR based testing of enteric pathogens. This is due to the manufacturers of the test reagents diverting resource to the production of SARS-CoV-2 assays.

As a result, we will be required to return to culture based diagnosis of enteric bacterial pathogens (*Campylobacter*, *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *Yersinia* and Verotoxin producing *E. coli*) for some of the faecal specimens coming in to Pathlab from the community setting.

We hope to retain molecular/PCR based diagnosis for hospitalised patients, children and those patients presenting with acute bloody diarrhoea.

Testing for parasites (including *Giardia* & *Cryptosporidium*) & *Clostridium difficile* will not be affected by this shortage.

We expect this situation may well last for several months until early 2021. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to reinforce “choosing wisely” testing of enteric bacterial pathogens, restricting testing to those patients who have severe symptoms and where it is likely to change the clinical management.

We apologise in advance for any delay in turnaround time for enteric pathogen diagnosis that this issue may cause.

Please contact us if you have any questions with regards to the above on ClinicalMicrobiology@pathlab.co.nz.

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CLINICAL UPDATE

Please ensure all members of your institution receive a copy of this clinical update.