



What's New?

Clyde Sector

Biochemistry Email Advice - ClydeBiochemAdvice@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Clyde Biochemistry are piloting a new email advice service. Clinical advice can now be obtained via email at the above address in addition to telephone queries. Users can expect a response within 24 hours and the service will run Mon-Fri 9-5pm. The aims of the service are to improve access for clinical advice and facilitate audit and record keeping of queries both for users and the laboratory service.

For information on tests and sample types users can access our lab handbook on the NHSGGC website (www.nhsggc.org.uk/about-us/professional-support-sites)

Use of the email service should follow current GG&C data protection guidance and requires an NHS email address to be used.

FSH Audit - Update

Recent best practice clinical guidelines published by NICE have indicated that FSH should no longer be used for the diagnosis of menopause. Instead it should be made as "a clinical diagnosis defined as the cessation of menses for ≥ 12 consecutive months in the absence of an associated pathology". The only instances under which FSH should be requested when investigating menopause are:

- Women < 40 years for ?premature ovarian failure.
- Women aged ≥ 40 to ≤ 45 years with menopausal symptoms, including a change in their menstrual cycle.
- Women >45 years with **atypical** symptoms.
- Women >50 years using a progesterone only contraceptive.

A recent audit carried out within the biochemistry department found a drop in the proportion of FSH requests for females >45 years old.

	FSH requests in females >45/month	% of all FSH requests
2017	205	47%
2018	117	37%

Table 1: Number and proportion of FSH requests in females >45 years of age from 2017 and 2018 per month.

This is a significant improvement from the previous findings published in the April 2018 newsletter. We would like to stress that FSH requesting for the investigation of menopause is not supported by the evidence base except in the circumstances described above.

Furthermore, it is recommended that neither LH or oestradiol are to be measured when investigating the menopause.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Menopause: diagnosis and management. Nov 2015. <https://www.nice.org.uk/>.
FSRH Guideline: Contraception for Women Aged Over 40 Years. Oct2017. <https://www.fsrh.org/standards-and-guidance/documents/fsrh-guidance-contraception-for-women-aged-over-40-years-2017/>.

GP Lab Orders

- 1) There has been an improvement in barcode quality resulting in a decrease in the number of blood samples rejected by the laboratory. The cause of the faded barcodes was identified as poor printer maintenance and use of labels past their expiry time.
- 2) When sending requests please remember to put a CHI (or GP ICE number), full name and DOB on the sample and form (if required). Any patient without a unique identifier available will have to have an address added with postcode. Samples with only 2 points of ID will be rejected.

We would be delighted with your feedback on issues that you would like us to address in the newsletter.

Comments or suggestions can be sent to:

John Mallon (John.Mallon@ggc.scot.nhs.uk), Dr Iain Jones (iain.jones@nhs.net) or Martin Wight (martinwight@nhs.net)