

An important update from York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Biochemistry disruption and processing of blood samples

Dear colleagues

This is not a manufacturing issue but a major failure in Roche's distribution system.

The disruption is estimated to last for at least a two-three week period. Many hospitals are affected, and affected hospitals have only a few days' supply remaining.

It is therefore extremely important that we work together to conserve supply of reagent for urgent and critical blood tests.

If we do nothing, York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust's Biochemistry Laboratory will run out of core reagents by Monday / Tuesday 12 / 13 October. We therefore need to stop all non-acute, non-critical tests with immediate effect. This will allow us to stretch our resources to the end of next week, 16 October, by which time the resupply situation will be clearer.

- All clinicians are requested to cancel any routine phlebotomy appointments and tests for the coming week (commencing 12 October 2020).
- Requests can still be sent in but MUST be marked 'URGENT' with clear clinical rationale provided.

The following tests are not being processed:

- TFT, ferritin, B12, folate, Vitamin D
- PSA and other tumour markers
- All hormones and BNP

(Samples received on 8 / 9 October have been stored to be processed once reagents are available).

Further guidance and advice will be developed to work through patient communications to this rapidly emerging situation to mitigate patients ringing GP practices as the default position.

Follow up blood tests for all patients discharged from hospital are being deferred to November.

We are currently looking for alternative solutions to try and restore laboratory services. There is however, a significant risk that the restrictions will need to be extended further, depending on the supply situation.

The service restrictions apply to Biochemistry testing only (including COVID antibody testing). Haematology and Microbiology (including COVID swab testing) are unaffected.

We are closely monitoring this situation and will send daily updates around 3pm to keep you apprised.