

LABORATORY POLICY FOR THE PROVISION OF “ON-CALL” SERVICES

The NIBTS Agency, in accord with their overall policy of providing a quality service for its users, provides a comprehensive laboratory service on a 24 hours per day basis.

Outside normal working hours, this commitment is discharged as outlined below;

1 CONTACT

Outside normal working hours, there will always be a fully qualified and comprehensively trained BMS on call. He/she can be contacted at all times by the Belfast City Hospital switchboard. It is the responsibility of the BMS on call to inform the switchboard that he/she is on call as soon as they take over that responsibility, and to carry either the mobile telephone provided or their own individual mobile to facilitate ease of contact. The BMS must also keep the switchboard informed of any alternative contact numbers should there be a malfunction of the telephone, or if it is, for any other reason, unavailable. The switchboard maintains a list of the home telephone numbers of all on-call personnel. There is also at all times a Medical Consultant on call. The Medical Consultant rota is maintained in the Blood Bank and can be accessed by the BMS on call. In the event that additional technical and/or support staff are required, the BMS on call will contact the appropriate staff. Contact numbers for all BMS staff are available in the Blood Bank carousel. Contact numbers for clerical and other support staff can be accessed in the Major Alert Procedure SOP (AD:001).

2 RESPONSE

The "on call" team provides essential out of hours cover for NIBTS. In order to respond appropriately it is important that there is clear communication between the person making the request and the person on call for NIBTS. This communication should make it clear the detail of the request and most importantly the degree of urgency in order to respond appropriately to urgent or non-urgent requests. All requests must be supported by a confirmatory fax. As this is an "on call" service the BMS on duty will respond by being at NIBTS laboratories within 30 minutes of receiving a call. This response will be subject to variation due to road conditions or adverse weather conditions. In all situations the person on call will respond appropriately.

3 INFORMATION

The laboratories maintain computerised data banks on all previously serologically investigated patient samples, and the BMS on call can access these banks (via the Patient Testing Services system) in the event that such information is required out-of-hours. The procedure for the release of such information is covered in the Reference Laboratory SOP on the Oral Transmission of Results (BG:050). Patient information is covered by the Data Protection Act and must not be divulged to unauthorised persons. Any information transmitted over the telephone should be logged on the Telephone Communication of Results Log (DD:252) in the Reference laboratory, as per SOP.

4 TECHNICAL SERVICES AVAILABLE

The BMS on call is responsible for the issue of blood and blood products when requested. He/she is also responsible for the manufacture of secondary blood products (washed, filtered, irradiated etc) as and when required. In the event that requested blood or blood products are not available, the BMS on call can, after consultation with the Medical Consultant on call, organize emergency testing of fresh blood, to expedite the availability of the requested components.

The laboratory also undertakes to provide a full and comprehensive out-of-hours serology service. This will include;

- a) ABO and Rhesus typings, where there are apparent discrepancies.
- b) The provision of phenotyped blood, where this is practicable. With rare phenotypes, this may not always be possible. In these circumstances the BMS will advise, after consultation with the Medical Consultant on call, on the appropriate steps to be taken.
- c) Red cell antibody investigations.
- d) The provision of crossmatched blood, when requested.
- e) The investigation of transfusion reactions.

- f) The investigation of Haemolytic Disease of the Newborn, due to ABO incompatibility or atypical red cell antibodies.

Platelet antibody testing is not normally carried out outside normal working hours. However, in the event of an emergency or during a holiday period, staff will be available to undertake such testing within 24 hours of being contacted.

Paternity testing (by red cell phenotyping) is not performed outside normal working hours.

Written by: *Mr R Melanaphy, BMS 3	Mr J Savage, Laboratory Manager.
(Signature) _____	_____
Date: _____	_____

Authorised by: Dr W M McClelland Chief Executive/Medical Director	
_____	Date: _____