
Implementation of the International Standardisation of HbA_{1c} measurement in Ireland

IEQAS Verification Process Point Of Care (POCT) meters

As summarised in a letter from the HSE to all hospital CEOs on 21st December 2009, you will be required to start "dual reporting" for HbA_{1c} from 1st July 2010, i.e. reporting both the traditional HbA_{1c} % result (DCCT) alongside the newer HbA_{1c} mmol/mol result (IFCC). The letter recommends that you participate in the IEQAS verification process. An excerpt from this letter (see www.ieqas.ie for copy of the letter) states:

The following verification process has been agreed to ensure concordance of the HbA_{1c} results with the IFCC Reference System. The Project Team recommends that the cost of this important exercise should be borne by each laboratory's quality management system and participation should not be regarded as optional. The support of each General Manager/CEO in this regard is most important:

- In the months prior to reporting the new HbA_{1c} (IFCC) units, any non-laboratory site providing HbA_{1c} analysis using a Point-of-Care-Testing (POCT) meter will be required to demonstrate concordance with the IFCC Reference system. To assist with this, IEQAS will supply three verification samples (at different HbA_{1c} levels) for analysis. Results for each sample will be assessed by comparison with HbA_{1c} values assigned by the European Reference Laboratory in the Netherlands. The fee is €170 for the first analyser; each additional analyser at any postal address: €80.*
- Additional sample distributions may be required if initial results do not agree with the European Reference Laboratory. The fee is €170 for the first analyser; each additional analyser at any postal address: €80.*

The distribution is planned for 13th April 2010. If your supplier has yet to upgrade your meter, please ensure that this has been completed well in advance of this distribution date. To register for the verification process for the POCT analysers for which you are responsible, please complete and return the Order Form before 26th March 2010.

Attendance at one of the information workshops during March is also advised.

Please check www.ieqas.ie (home page) for regular updates.

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