

Monash Health Pathology

GP Newsletter

September 2020

Pathology Services Update

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Our Microbiology Molecular PCR lab continues to process COVID-19 tests 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Our COVID-19 SMS service, sends all patients with a negative COVID result a text message containing their result. As part of this service, patients are provided a prompt to follow up results of tests for other viruses, e.g. influenza. The service has been updated to only prompt those patients where another virus is detected. This provides clearer information for patients whose swabs are tested for our full panel of 12 respiratory viruses (including COVID-19), and streamlines the follow up of results.



All inpatients and patients presenting to emergency departments automatically receive our full respiratory panel. Patients presenting to screening clinics primarily receive only results for COVID-19.

We can be contacted at COVIDenquiries@monashhealth.org if a test needs to be prioritised, or any assistance is required in following up results. Please include the patient's full name and date of birth, and mobile number if available.

Patients can also contact us directly at the above email address if their test is being processed by Monash Health Pathology.

If patients have been waiting for their result for **more than 5 days** and are not sure who to contact, they can now call the dedicated **Coronavirus Test Results Hotline on 1800 573 222**. This service is provided by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and is currently available from **Monday to Friday between 8.00am and 8.00pm**.

If you have any questions about our COVID-19 SMS service, or about the new Coronavirus Test Results Hotline, please contact Natalie Soucek, Client Relationship Manager on **9594 5850**.

Monash Health Pathology News

Change to Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) lower reporting limit to 0.01 ug/L

Our PSA results now include the reporting of values between 0.01ug/L and 0.1ug/L. This will enable close monitoring of patients after radical prostatectomy.

It is important to use the same laboratory for this purpose as the PSA results from different laboratories may not be directly comparable.

Medicare will rebate up to four tests per year for serial monitoring of PSA.



For more information, please contact Biochemistry Clinical Lead A/Prof Zhong Lu on 9594 5585.

New initiatives in testing – Procalcitonin

A long awaited development in our Biochemistry Department is the initiation and validation of procalcitonin testing.

This is a highly specialised test and most relevant to hospital inpatients at risk of sepsis. It has additional significance for COVID-19 patients. A high procalcitonin in a COVID-19 positive patient indicates a super-added bacterial infection and is associated with a need for intubation.

In non-COVID-19 patients who are on antibiotics, serial measurements of procalcitonin can provide support in determining the ceasing of antibiotics, and in so doing reduce the risk of developing bacterial resistance.

To discuss the use of this tool in managing inpatient treatment, please contact Biochemistry Clinical Lead A/Prof Zhong Lu.

Pathology announcements

We are pleased to advise of two key appointments within Pathology: Kristy De George in the role of General Manager, and A/Prof Beena Kumar as Program Director.

Kristy and Beena are both excited about their roles, and are looking forward to continuing their work with the same commitment and dedication.

Collection centre locations

Collection Centre	Address	Telephone	Hours
COWES	Phillip Island Health Hub 50-54 Church Street, Cowes	03 5951 2120	Monday to Friday 8.00am – 4.00pm Saturday 8.00am – 11.30am
FOSTER	Foster Hospital 87 Station Street, Foster	TBA	Monday to Friday 8.00am – 2.30pm
LEONGATHA	Leongatha Hospital 66 Koonwarra Road, Leongatha	03 5667 5573	Monday to Friday 8.00am – 4.00pm Saturday 9.00am – 11.00am
KORUMBURRA	Korumburra Hospital 65 Bridge St, Korumburra	5654 2799	Monday to Friday 8:00am – 3.00pm
WONTHAGGI	Wonthaggi Hospital 235 Graham Street, Wonthaggi	Phone 03 5671 3292 Fax 03 5671 4293	Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm Saturday 8.30am – 10.30am Sunday 8.00am – 12.00 noon
YARRAM	Yarram Hospital 85 Commercial Road, Yarram	Phone 03 5182 0360 Fax 03 5182 0393	Monday to Friday 8:00am - 2:30pm

Receiving your patient's results

We are able to provide patient results to you in the format you require; downloaded into your practice software, faxed or hard copy.

To set up your preferred result format, please contact us on 9594 4538 or email pathology@monashhealth.org

The referring Doctor will be notified of any critical results.

Expertise and advice

Our Pathologists and Scientific staff are available any time to assist with pathology reports or referrals. Please contact us at 9594 4538 or email pathology@monashhealth.org

Key contacts

Natalie Soucek
Client Relationship Manager
9594 5850

Rhiannon Bentley
Pre-Analytical Manager
9594 4973

Kristy De George
General Manager Pathology
9594 3479