

DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO USERS

**Changes to investigation of abnormal vaginal discharge for
Bacterial Vaginosis and Trichomonas vaginalis**

Dear User,

As part of our on-going quality improvements, we need to update our users regarding changes to the following investigations in line with the latest PHE guidance "Management and Laboratory Diagnosis of Abnormal Vaginal Discharge" and updates to the Leeds Care Pathways for vaginal infection.

As a result, from the 1st December 2016, the Microbiology laboratory is changing its examination procedures for the investigation of Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) and *Trichomonas vaginalis* (TV).

Bacterial Vaginosis

Microbiology will cease **routine testing** by microscopy for BV from High Vaginal Swabs (HVS).

BV may be diagnosed clinically if the following criteria are fulfilled:

- grey-white, thin homogenous discharge
- vaginal secretions pH > 4.5
- positive amine odour test (release of fishy amine odour when vaginal secretion is mixed with 5-10% potassium hydroxide)

Whilst Gram films performed in the laboratory on high vaginal swabs can aid diagnosis of BV, the diagnosis of BV should not be made solely on the results of the microscopy.

Therefore, the laboratory will only test HVS swabs for BV by microscopy when explicitly requested and accompanied by sufficient clinical details to justify testing.

Trichomonas vaginalis

Microbiology will cease routine liquid culture for TV and replace with Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing (NAAT) for TV investigations. This test should only be offered alongside NAAT for Chlamydia and/or Gonorrhoea for women if:

- ?sexually transmitted infection
- a new sexual partner in the last 12 months
- symptoms indicative of upper reproductive tract infection
- more than one sexual partner in the last 12 months

Patients suspected of infection with TV should ideally be referred for management by GUM.

TV NAAT investigations will be performed on the same Aptima vaginal swabs sent for the Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea testing. DO NOT send a routine charcoal swab.

To assist clinicians in the management of abnormal vaginal discharges I have attached the latest PHE guidance.

You will also notice changes to our ICE Order Comms system for laboratory requests. We are improving the system to direct users to the most suitable investigation(s) for gynaecological investigations in woman. We welcome comments regarding the changes to ensure the system is user friendly.

I hope you find the attached information useful. If you wish to discuss the changes in more detail then please contact me:

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Kind regards

Ian Cocking

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