



Managing Incoming Pathology Results

Version:	Review date:	Edited by:	Approved by:	Comments:
1.0	25 th August 2020	Claire Laing	Dr Nicki Mantel-Cooper	Review September 2022

Table of contents

1	Introduction	2
1.1	Policy statement	2
1.2	Status	2
1.3	Training and support	2
2	Scope	2
2.1	Who it applies to	2
2.2	Why and how it applies to them	2
3	Definition of terms	2
3.1	Pathology	2
3.2	Chemical pathology	3
3.3	Haematology	3
3.4	Histopathology	3
3.5	Medical microbiology	3
4	Policy	3
4.1	E-results	3
4.2	Cytology results	3
4.3	Unmatched results	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.4	Tracking requests	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.5	Communicating results to patients	3
4.6	Recording Information	3
4.7	Summary	4
	Annex A – Specimen Log	5



1 Introduction

1.1 Policy statement

The purpose of this document is to outline the process for the management of incoming pathology results at NICS detailing the responsibilities of staff to ensure every result is acted upon and subsequent actions taken, delivering highly effective patient care.

1.2 Status

This document and any procedures contained within it are non-contractual and may be modified or withdrawn at any time. For the avoidance of doubt, it does not form part of your contract of employment.

1.3 Training and support

NICS will provide guidance and support to help those to whom it applies to understand their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Additional support will be provided to managers and supervisors to enable them to deal more effectively with matters arising from this policy.

2 Scope

2.1 Who it applies to

This document applies to all employees of NICS, other individuals performing functions in relation to NICS, such as agency workers, locums and contractors.

2.1 Why and how it applies to them

This document sets the standard for both clinical and administrative staff regarding their involvement in the processing of pathology results. This includes clinicians giving patients sufficient, clear information about their test results and follow-up arrangements if applicable. It is to be read in conjunction with the referenced material and local directives.

NICS aims to design and implement policies and procedures that meet the diverse needs of our service and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Consideration has been given to the impact this policy might have in regard to the individual protected characteristics of those to whom it applies.

3 Definition of terms

3.1 Pathology

The study of disease, its causes and progression



3.2 Chemical pathology

The study of chemicals in the blood and other fluids

3.3 Haematology

The study of disorders of the blood

3.4 Histopathology

The study of disease of human tissue

3.5 Medical microbiology

The study of infection

For the purpose of this policy, the term pathology will be used to cover all of the above descriptors.

4 Policy

4.1 E-results

Pathology results are received electronically via pathology links section of the EMIS WEB clinical system. NICS admin staff will check results in workflow lab reports. They will then forward the result to the patients own surgery via outlook.

Process:

It is the responsibility of the Patients own GP to view and action the results as appropriate using one of the following descriptors:

- Normal – no further action
- Borderline – make appointment for a repeat test/appointment in [x] days' time
- Abnormal – make routine/urgent appointment to see GP or nurse in [x] days or weeks

4.2 Cytology results

NICS do not have cervical cytology clinics at present.

4.3 Unmatched results

There may be, on occasion, results received at NICS which do not match any of the patients,. In such instances, NICS admin will contact the pathology department at Frimley Hospital by email advising them of the error.

4.4 Tracking requests



A specimen log should be implemented by the Service manager which will ensure that results are returned to patients own practice. An example of a specimen log can be found at Annex A.

4.5 Communicating results to patients

NICS do not inform the patient of the result as this is done by the patients own practice. Should a patient call and enquire about their results, NICS admin will refer them back to their own practice for the result

4.6 Recording information

All staff must ensure that they record all patient contact regarding pathology results using the appropriate read codes.

4.7 Summary

High quality communication is critical to patient safety. The processing of test results is an important element of communication between NICS and the patient. Failure to adhere to internal processes will undoubtedly contribute to unsafe patient care leading to sub-optimal outcomes. Staff must ensure that they adhere to the processes outlined in this policy to ensure that a high standard of patient care is delivered at all times.

