

Biochemistry Network Advisory Group Meeting  
 Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2009, 2-4pm  
 One Central Park, Manchester, M40 5BP

In attendance			Apologies	
Malcolm Blower	MB	The Christie NHS Foundation Trust	Deepak Bhatnager	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
Denise Darby	DD	The Christie NHS Foundation Trust	Gillian Burrows	Stockport NHS Foundation Trust
George Fielding	GF	Stockport NHS Foundation Trust	Chris Chaloner	Central Manchester NHS Foundation Tr
Mark Guy	MG	Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust	David Hamer	Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation
Rod Hinchcliffe	RH	Central Manchester NHS Foundation Trst	Jane Hewitt	Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation
Brian Keevil	BK	UHSM NHS Foundation Trust	Christine Hill	Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust
Laura Kidd	LK	GMPCTs	Andrew	Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation
Rachel Pearson	RP	GMPCTs	Hutchesson	
Stephen Scarisbrick	SS	Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust	Keith Hyde	Central Manchester NHS Foundation T
Jeff Seneviratne	JS	GMPCTs	Neil Jenkinson	GMPCTs
Keith Wiener	KW	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	John Kane	Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
Gilbert Wieringa	GW	Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation T	John Mansley	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
			John Martin	Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation
			Steven McCann	Stockport NHS Foundation Trust
			David Oleesky	East Cheshire NHS Trust
			Aram Rudenski	Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
			Lance Sandle	Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust
			Robert Smith	WWL NHS Foundation Trust
			Felicity Stewart	Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
			Tony Tetlow	Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation
			David Tierney	UHSM NHS Foundation Trust
			Carolyn Williams	Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation

**Discussion Points**

- **Welcome and Introductions** – JS introduced all members due to new attendees.
- **Chair's Communications** – The group briefly discussed the last Network Board meeting minutes which was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 and the SWOT analysis.
- **Network Strategy Group** - Lance Sandle attended the first meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2009 as the Biochemistry representative at the request of JS. The group discussed who should be the permanent Biochemistry representative and deputy. The group were content for LS to be the representative, but it was agreed that LK would email the group and ask for nominations for a deputy. JS explained that the rationale for the Strategy Group is about anticipating problems and responding pro-actively. He explained that the Strategy Group was challenged by the CE members to look at ways to make savings whilst maintaining/improving quality, and that the Network should consider this through its NAGS . The group talked at length about the different options and implications and JS explained that he, NJ and KH have been meeting with commissioners to raise the profile of the Network as a source of expert advice, and to get the message in the system that anyone thinking of making changes to Pathology services should come to the Network in the first instance. The group discussed the national tariff and when it would come into effect. JS explained that a primary care tariff is one of the workstreams that are part of Ian Barnes' remit at the Department of Health. RP explained that a number of local PCTs are considering tendering parts of pathology services (e.g. cervical cytology, anticoagulation, GP direct access work) and that it is the intention that the Network Strategy Group will facilitate a more proactive approach.
- **Minutes of last meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009** - were accepted as a correct record.
- **Matters Arising** – the following matters were raised
- **BNP** – JS reported that he had circulated the slides from the January event and urged members to respond to Rick Jones' BNP survey. JS explained that if BNP is not being introduced for financial reasons, this becomes a commissioning issue. JS reported that he is trying to meet with the Cardiac Network and Prof. Christi Deaton to discuss follow up of the BNP workshop held in January.
- **SWOT Analysis** – JS explained that this would inform the Network Strategy and pointed out that from the Network Board and Biochemistry SWOT analysis there are a number over overlapping areas. JS asked for comments regarding this.
- **Update on Workstreams** –
- **Familial Hypercholesterolaemia** – JS reported that he has discussed this issue with Steve Downing (Strategic Finance Lead - AGMPCTs) and was awaiting his response. It was previously agreed that standard comments would be implemented and it was agreed to follow this up before the next meeting.
- **Changes to HbA1c Reporting** – LS had convened a group which had produced a letter to go out under the Network logo. RP has the letter which will be Network branded and then circulated to all the Haematology and Biochemistry labs in Greater Manchester to be customised with individual details. The implementation date for the new reporting system is 1<sup>st</sup>

June 2009. KW reported that analyser manufacturers will not have issued the software to support dual reporting by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2009 and it may take until the end of the year. KW explained that labs would need to use a different read-code to report results to GPs, which is 42W5 – HbA1c – IFCC standardised.

- **Microalbumin** – The group discussed at length microalbumin testing. It appears that requests for this test are treated differently lab to lab. The group discussed the possibility of standardising the test and BK suggested that NICE funding maybe available for implementation. The general consensus of the group is that they are prepared to test for microalbumin as part of CKD follow up if funds permit. JS suggested it might be possible to investigate funding if we had an estimate of the costs. He asked all labs to estimate the additional costs of doing albumin rather than protein.
- **GP Out of Hours Communications** – the discrepancies between College and local concern limits especially for therapeutic drugs was raised at the SAC meeting in Feb 09. LS agreed to provide an update from the minutes of the SAC via email.
- Discussion took place regarding OOH provision. LK to contact all 10 PCTs and Trusts to confirm current service provider details.
- **Paraprotein Investigations** – MG to take the lead on this project. JS asked MG to look at membership of this group identify what he needs and then standardise. It was decided to circulate the guidelines again then once tightened up the group agreed to get Haematologists to ratify. GW agreed to join the group and represent Bolton. There was some discussion on the use of Free Light Chains and it was agreed that the guidelines should include details of the limitations of free light chains.
- **Harmony Project** – A letter signed by Ian Barnes in conjunction with DH is due to be circulated. JS reminded the group that a Harmony conference will take place in Birmingham on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009. A proposal has been developed to standardise the adjustment of serum calcium in the UK. Comments on this can be made and further information is available via the Harmony website ([www.pathologyharmony.co.uk](http://www.pathologyharmony.co.uk) - username: harmony, password: marcopolactin).
- **Referred tests** – The group discussed the current situation and as there has been little interest by Haematology the group have agreed to move the database forward with the information they have. GW is to prepare a summary of our current position ready for the next meeting. It was agreed that GW would liaise with RP regarding the website and a meeting outside of this one would be arranged to develop a local assay finder.
- **PAGs** – Update on progress was reported as follows:
- **IM&T** – JS and DS visited X Lab to see test system. Testing will begin between Stockport and the MRI at the end of May. The problems with Clinisys have not yet been resolved and Technidata have still not engaged.
- **GP Order Comms** – This works best with the EMIS system, Pennine are the only paperless trust. MRI is very busy currently with Lorenzo and Bolton is waiting for a DLM280 patch for the InPractice system.
- **Any other business**
- **Downs Screening** – GW raised the issue of Downs' screening at Bolton changing from the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester to the 1<sup>st</sup>. This was due to go live on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2009 but has been stopped because work on the HRG4 tariff is still underway and there is a need to wait and see how this compares with current costs.
- GW highlighted the wider potential implication for pathology services of the national tariff work.
- **Diabetes Awareness Day, Manchester Town Hall – 20<sup>th</sup> June 2009** - The group discussed the benefits of having a Network stall at the event. GF offered to pass on the information Stockport used at their last event.
- **Willink** – JS reported that he had written to Alan Cooper (Head of Willink) and invited him to engage with the NAG. To date JS has had no response. It was agreed that a representative is needed from Paediatrics and the group discussed options to engage with specialist services.
- **Infection Control** – Hand Hygiene initiatives were discussed by the group as a number of Trusts currently have a big push on this. Trusts are insisting on correct training, displaying of posters and screen savers etc.
- **Calcitonin** – DD mentioned to the group that the assay is up and running at the Christie and agreed to send details to RP for circulation.
- **Tatton Flower Show** – JS reiterated the need for sponsorship, support and participation in the Pathology garden.
- **IBMS CPD Certificates** were available
- **Leadership Development Programme for HCS** – details had been circulated by RP. JS urged members to promote this within their labs.

### **Actions**

- Labs to submit estimated additional costs of doing albumin; creatinine rather than protein; creatinine
- JS to then investigate possible sources of funding
- LK to update OOH service providers for all 10 PCTs
- RP to organise meeting re website/assay finder
- DD to send RP assay information re Calcitonins for circulation
- LK to ask for nominations for Biochemistry representative and named deputy for Network Strategy Group
- JS to follow up Steve Downing re: FH
- GF: FH –standardisation of comments to be implemented and reported to next meeting
- RP to circulate network standard letter re: HbA1c reporting
- LS to provide update on SAC/OOH reporting

### **Recommendations to the Greater Manchester Pathology Network Board (if any)**

- None

### **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009, 2pm-4pm, One Central Park, Manchester M40 5BP