

**Notification to Medical Testing laboratories (17<sup>th</sup> October 2017):**

**Accreditation according to the Irish Guideline for the Investigation of Blood Culture Samples (Issued June 2017) .**

INAB will accredit Medical laboratories according to the Irish Guideline for the Investigation of Blood Cultures (June 2017). The laboratory shall present its risk assessment (As referred to in the guidelines) for review by the INAB assessment teams. The risk assessment shall ensure the following:

- The Turnaround time (TAT) for the blood cultures test is defined clearly and unambiguously by each laboratory. i.e number of hours is defined. Statements such as, 'as soon as possible', 'up to X hours' etc. shall not be used in the definition of TAT.
- Blood culture bottles are loaded to the laboratory testing equipment within four hours from when the sample is taken. (As per the guidelines). Any positive results are reported in accordance with each laboratory stated risk assessed TATs.
- The time within which the laboratory will provide a gram stain result is defined clearly and specifically for each laboratory and is reasonable taking into account the patient demographic. The laboratory shall have the capability in place to complete the gram stain. Please also see the note below in relation to PS 23.
- Timeline for ID and susceptibility testing is 24-48 hours. (As per the guidelines.)
- The TAT defined by the laboratory shall be approved by Clinical Director / Clinical Lead of the Hospital. i.e. the TAT is fit for purpose and meets the requirement of the users of the service.

Note: The underlying principle that each patient sample is treated equally, irrespective of the time when the sample is taken shall be applied and INAB policy statement PS23 shall be adhered to at all times.

If a laboratory wishes to apply for accreditation using the UK Guidelines for Blood cultures, this will also be considered by the assessment teams.

Please contact your INAB officer if you require more details.