



# Lab Bulletin

## State-of-the-Art Chemistry and Immunology Instrumentation Benefits

Northwest Clinical Laboratory (NWCL) is pleased to announce the implementation of new leading-edge Siemens Dimension Vista analyzers this month. This instrumentation allows consolidation of four platforms into one robust analyzer. As a best practice, NWCL will run the Vista instrumentation with a full mirror back-up analyzer to ensure optimal turnaround time.

Benefits of the new "Vista" instrumentation include:

- Increased sensitivity and specificity
  - For example, the BNP assay has been converted to the NT-proBNP to increase specificity for chronic heart failure
- **The change from SST (serum) to PST (plasma) tube type as the new primary chemistry tube type** permits smaller sample volumes
- Faster analysis time decreases the total turnaround time
- Improved testing efficiency with decreased costs
- Ability to 'add-on' a front-end robotic/ automation solution which connects robotics with the new instrumentation. Front-end automation has become a laboratory industry best practice. The front-end or pre-analytic phase of laboratory testing includes processing of the specimen to prepare it for testing, and order entry into the Laboratory Information System.

Need more information?

- A detailed four page Lab Bulletin memo (yellow paper) was mailed to all medical staff Monday, December 8th.
- Visit our website at [nwhospital.org](http://nwhospital.org). Select "Services"/ then NWCL, click on link to website. Select the "News" tab and then find the associated "Lab Bulletin" memo.
- Lab Bulletins are also available on the lab home page via the Intranet. (Choose Departments/ Units followed by "Lab", and then click on "Lab Bulletins".)
- Refer to NWCL's on-line Test Directory and search for informa-



Siemens Dimension Vista Chemistry/Immunology Instrument

tion by test.

- An updated NWCL clinical laboratory requisition is anticipated to be available in February, with the new tube changes noted. In the interim, please call (206) 368-1776 if you need a copy.
- Michelle Manis, Chemistry Supervisor can be reached at (206) 368-2038, or Richard Patton, MD at (206) 368-1779 for additional information.

The following tests have changes related to the Vista instrumentation upgrade:

- |                  |                              |                                |
|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| - Acetaminophen  | - Homocysteine               | - T3-Uptake                    |
| - Beta HCG       | - IGA                        | - T4                           |
| - CRP            | - IGG                        | - Theophylline                 |
| - Cardio CRP     | - IGM                        | - Total bilirubin              |
| - Digoxin        | - LDH                        | - Triglyceride                 |
| - Ferritin       | - LDL                        | - Uric Acid                    |
| - Folate         | - Lipase                     | - Urine Total Protein (random) |
| - Free T4        | - Microalbumin               | - Valproic Acid                |
| - GGT            | - Magnesium                  |                                |
| - Gentamicin     | - Potassium                  |                                |
| - HDL            | - Spinal Fluid Total Protein |                                |
| - Hemoglobin A1C | - T3                         |                                |

## New Cardiac Test Ranges

The chemistry instrumentation upgrades have led to several important cardiac normal reference range changes, and two test menu changes.

Brief summary of the cardiac test menu:

- CPK and Troponin – no change
- CKMB – new reference range
- CKMB Index becomes Relative Index, with a new reference range
- Change from BNP to NT-proBNP assay to increase specificity for chronic heart failure. New set of reference ranges.

For more information, please visit the Laboratory's website via the Intranet or the Internet at [www.nwhospital.org](http://www.nwhospital.org) and click on "Lab Bulletins". Choose the "Changes in Chemistry Samples" memo dated December 15, 2008. Or contact Michelle Manis, Chemistry Supervisor at (206) 368-2039 or Richard Patton, MD at (206) 368-1779.

## Microbiology Testing Update

- **MRSA Screen TAT Reduction:** With MRSA being front-page news, NWCL anticipates additional requests for MRSA testing. We have reduced our MRSA testing turnaround time from 48-72 hours to 18-24 hours. This is good news not only for faster treatment, but also to determine whether a patient requires isolation.
- **Clostridium difficile Assay Now Available STAT on a 24/7 Basis:** The estimated turnaround time for 'C. diff' result is 30-45 minutes from the time of specimen receipt in Microbiology. The previous turnaround time was 24 hours.
- **Increased Antibiotic Susceptibility Testing Capabilities:** We have doubled the number of antibiotics that can be screened for in-house from 12 to 24 with the recent addition of a new MicroScan instrument. For example, ESBL (extended spectrum beta lactamases) can now be confirmed in-house. Our expanded susceptibilities test menu allows physicians a broader choice of antibiotics, and earlier results.

Questions? Call Microbiology at (206) 368-1365.

## Business News:

### **Physician Satisfaction Survey:**

A physician satisfaction survey was sent to the medical staff December 22-23rd. Please complete the survey and return it to Wendy Williams. She can be reached at [Wendy.Williams@nwhea.org](mailto:Wendy.Williams@nwhea.org) if you prefer an electronic copy, or at (206) 368-2062 with questions. Our street address is Northwest Clinical Laboratory, 1530 North 115th Street, Suite 304, Seattle WA 98133. We appreciate your responses!



## Laboratory Support Services

Please call (206) 368-1776 with your testing, supply, courier and billing inquiries.

## Laboratory Key Contacts - For additional contacts, visit the Lab homepage via the Intranet, or call for a hard copy listing.

**Barb Eneberg**, Laboratory Account Specialist

(206) 368-1734

**April Stone**, Laboratory Account Specialist

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**Nancy Huntington**, Laboratory Account Specialist

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This newsletter is brought to you by the Northwest Hospital Clinical Laboratory.  
Comments to Wendy Williams at (206) 368-2062 or [Wendy.Williams@nwhea.org](mailto:Wendy.Williams@nwhea.org).