RQ9181 – Whole Blood

Welcome to the RIQAS Point of Care Scheme

As a valued participant to the RIQAS POC scheme we would like to welcome you and give you an introduction as to what you can expect while participating on our EQA schemes.

Additional information can be found in the Randox company profile brochure or on our website www.randox.com

Introduction

Why participate in a Quality Assurance (QA) Scheme?
Participation can help provide assurance that patients' results are reliable. Generating accurate and reproducible results ensures that the right advice can be offered to a patient. The RIQAS POC scheme distributes blood samples to participants each month so that performance of analysers on site can be assessed. The results generated at any one location are then compared against the average of results generated by other participants analysing the same sample. The scheme currently offers four main test parameters Total Cholesterol, HDL Cholesterol (combined to make up the Lipids parameter), HbA1c and CRP.

Quality Assessment
The aim of quality assessment is to mimic a real-life situation i.e. how a patients' sample would be treated. Quality assurance procedures in POCT should be applied to the same standard as in the routine laboratory setting. EQA involves the analysis of samples of unknown analyte concentration from an external source. Results are compared with other users; individual results are confidential to each site.
This is intended to provide evidence of continuing satisfactory analytical performance and the opportunity for remedial action if an instrument or location is shown to have poor results. The laboratory will collate results and a confidential report of performance returned to each location

The report highlights the average result for all participants, the submitted result and whether this is within an acceptable range. The acceptable range is defined as that range which captures 95% of all results. Results outside this 95% range are flagged as unacceptable and will be alerted to the machine supplier. It is mandatory that the QA scheme is completed every month to check the validity of the CardioChek machine.

Sample Processing
Samples are distributed in the first week of the month, usually the first Monday with a 9-day deadline for return of results via the RIQAS Point of Care website - qc.randox.com. One vial of whole blood 0.3 ml sample is more than sufficient to test on three analysers.

Samples are shipped via Royal Mail (First Class), and distributed as follows:
•1 sample (300 µl) for sites that have between 1 and 3 machines
•2 samples (600 µl) for sites that have between 4 and 6 machines

The sample is shipped at room temperature and should be stored at 2 - 8˚C upon receipt if it cannot be tested straight away. If the sample has been refrigerated, then the samples should be out of the fridge for 45 mins before testing - if not, this could alter results and produce a failed RIQAS submission.
Roll the tube back and forth for 20-30 seconds. DO NOT SHAKE. Avoid getting air bubbles in the sample.
Once opened please use the sample within 2 days.
Do not freeze

Sample vials are shipped in cardboard packaging and are clearly marked as a Category B Biological Substance.

The samples are sourced from blood donations. Only donations that are non-reactive or negative for the parameters below are circulated

- Non-reactive for antigens to Hepatitis B
- Negative by tests for antibodies to HIV and Hepatitis C
- Non-reactive for HIV-1 RNA and HCV RNA
- The samples should be handled as if they were patients' blood and disposed of appropriately. The test strip, pipette tip and blood sample should be disposed of as clinical waste.

Submitting Results
Results must be submitted by the deadline date; you should receive an email from Randox letting you know your samples are on their way with submission deadline date. Please, use Google Chrome rather than Internet Explorer to access the website. The practice is responsible for ensuring that EQA samples are tested within the EQA provider's guidance and timeframe, and the results are returned within the deadline to the EQA supplier. If the practice receives a poor result in the EQA scheme they should follow the EQA suppliers troubleshooting guidance to determine the source of the error.

Monitoring Performance
Each site will receive an individual report indicating if they have satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance. If satisfactory performance has been achieved then no further action is required, if however, performance is deemed unsatisfactory then further action should be taken.

A monthly performance report comparing the site's performance against their peers will be issued to the area coordinator or machine supplier within the month the results are returned. If poor performance is detected the user will be alerted by their machine supplier or area coordinator and corrective actions will be put in place.
These reports can be downloaded via PDF or an excel document.

Results Submitted after the Submission Closing date will not be accepted.

Contact Details
For any further information please contact the RIQAS POC team via:

- email on riqas_poc@randox.com
- telephone on 028 944 54399 between the hours of 0840 – 1720 GMT.