

BULLETIN #31 – September 30, 2008

Clarification Regarding Bulletin #30

In response to Bulletin #30, we have received a number of calls in the past week asking if we are still testing samples obtained on babies at less than 24 hours of age. The answer is **YES**. Please see below for additional details.

Our less than 24 hour unsatisfactory reports used to contain the following comment:

“The blood sample was analyzed and found to be SCREEN NEGATIVE for all diseases currently screened. Please note that not all diseases are reliably detected using blood samples taken before 24 hours of age. A REPEAT SAMPLE IS REQUESTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ”

We have learned that some submitters were receiving this report and entering “negative” in their LIS for the baby’s NBS result and NOT arranging for a repeat. Because of this, we opted to remove the comment regarding the screening results of the test.

Reports for samples obtained at less than 24 hours of age will now state:
“A REPEAT SAMPLE IS REQUESTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE”.

We will still analyze all samples received on infants that were taken at less than 24 hours of age and therefore, we still encourage submitters to obtain blood samples on babies at less than 24 hours of age if they are being discharged or about to receive a blood transfusion.

This permits:

- a) Creation of a paper trail reflecting that the baby requires a repeat
- b) Analysis of at least one screen in the event that the baby is not brought back for a repeat (albeit a screen that could be inaccurate for some of the conditions)
- c) Rapid follow-up of a baby that screens positive on a less than 24 hour sample.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in making the Ontario Newborn Screening Program the most effective and efficient that it can be.

Additional information about the Ontario Newborn Screening Program can be found at:
www.newbornscreening.on.ca

These bulletins are being circulated to keep you abreast of changes to the Ontario Newborn Screening program. Please share this information with any relevant personnel in your hospital / clinic. If there is someone who would like to be added to this list, contact:
Shelley Kennedy or Sari Zelenietz, Genetic Counsellors
(613) 738-3222, option #1; NewbornScreening@cheo.on.ca