

Re: Your request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

In June 2022 NHS England published a document entitled 'Improving the blood culture pathway' which included a few recommendations regarding blood culture collection and data that should be collected and reported on at Board level. Can you please provide me with answers to the following questions?

1. Does your Trust have a process for skin preparation/cleaning prior to blood collection? **Yes**
2. Do you take two sets of blood cultures each time as recommended in the guidance? **Trust guidance is to take two sets when sepsis is suspected but a lot of the time only one set is taken. Discussion with a Consultant may explain why only one set is taken most of the time?**
3. If no, what percentage of patients do have two sets of blood cultures taken? **This is quite a small percentage although annual Blood cultures workload has risen by 23% in 2022/23 from 2021/22 figures. If required we may be able to get the exact percentage of two set patients.**
4. Do you measure the volume of blood taken each time a blood culture is taken (the recommended amount is 20ml per sample)? **No. it would be too labour intensive to carry this out with our current instrumentation. New BC instrumentations is currently part of a new managed service contract currently in the final stages of sign off by the Trust.**
5. Do you measure the time between blood sample collection and the sample being loaded onto an analyser instrument (the recommended maximum time is four hours)? **This can be monitored via an audit but is not done on a regular basis**
6. If yes, what is the average time? **At the last audit the average time was less than 4 hours**
7. Do you collect data on blood sample contamination? **Yes**
8. Is the data described above reported at Board level as recommended? **Yes**