**Microbiological Diagnostic Unit, Public Health Laboratory Sample collection and transport guidelines Record date: 11/04/2022**

**Request form requirements**

1. Patient request forms - A minimum of three identifiers must be provided on the request form (Patient name, date of birth, unique medical/lab record number)
2. Sample/specimen identifiers on samples and request forms must match each other

**Sample labelling requirements**:

1. Patient specimens - Minimum of two identifiers. (**patient name**, DOB (ideally) and/or unique medical record identifier)
2. Date of sample collection and sample source is essential.
3. Samples must be transported as per: **NPAAC Requirement for the packaging and Transport of pathology specimens and associated materials.**

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| **Test type** | **Sample type** | **Minimum amount**  | **Container type** | **Special Instructions** | **Transport**  | **Request form** |
| PCR for direct detection of selected bacterial pathogens* *N. meningitides*
* *S. pneumoniae*
 | Blood CSF | 5ml2ml(0.5ml minimum) | Potassium EDTA or sodium citrate bloodCSF in sterile tube | Must arrive before 11am Seal tubes with parafilm (or equivalent) to prevent leakage.Place into a biohazard bag. | 4oCDo not freeze | FM119Human clinical |
| Bacterial Identification including Risk Group 3 pathogen/ SSBA confirmation.  | Bacterial culture  | Not applicable | Culture on agar plate or slope | Pure culture must be prepared from a single colony on non-selective agar or slopeEnsure plate/broth is sealed with parafilm (or equivalent) and placed inside a biohazard bagEnsure associated paperwork is in the external pocket and not placed in with the sampleNotify MDU before sending if suspect SSBA  | Room temperature | FM119Human clinical |

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| **Test type** | **Sample type** | **Minimum amount**  | **Container type** | **Special Instructions** | **Transport**  | **Request form** |
| Bacterial typing/characterization including:*E. coli STEC* * *Listeria*
* *Haemophilus influenzae*
* *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*
* *Neisseria meningitidis*
* *Salmonella*
* *Shigella*
* *Streptococcus pneumonia*
* *Vibrio cholerae*
 | Bacterial culture  | Not applicable  | Culture on agar plate or slope | Pure culture must be prepared from a single colony on non-selective agar or slope.Ensure plate/broth is sealed with parafilm (or equivalent) and placed inside a biohazard bagEnsure associated paperwork is in the external pocket and not placed in with the sample | Room temperature | FM119 Human clinicalFM2085 *Listeria monocytognes*NEPSS card if *Salmonella spp* |
| Antimicrobial resistance genes detection* CPE
* mecA
* VRE
 | Culture only | Not applicable  | Culture on plate or agar slope   | Pure culture must be prepared from a single colony on non-selective agar or slopeEnsure plate/broth is sealed with parafilm (or equivalent) and placed inside a biohazard bagEnsure associated paperwork is in the external pocket and not placed in with the sample | Room temperature | FM2458, Human clinical NEPSS if Salmonella |
| Heterotrophic Colony Count (HCC) | Cooling tower waters | 100ml | Sterile sampling bottle | Ideally, samples should be processed within 6 hours of collection. Record collection time on sampleThey may be examined up to 24 hours after collection, provided they are kept cool (2-10oC) and in the dark. | Esky with ice bricks | FM117 Water Request form |

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| **Test type** | **Sample type** | **Minimum amount**  | **Container type** | **Special Instructions** | **Transport**  | **Request form** |
| Legionella | Cooling tower waters | 100ml | Sterile sampling bottle | Ideally, samples should be processed within 6 hours of collection. Record collection time on sampleThey may be examined up to 24 hours after collection, provided they are kept cool (2-10oC) and in the dark.  | Esky with ice bricks | FM117 Water Request form |
| Enteric pathogen screen and identification | Faeces | 5g (minimum 1g) | Faecal container 70ml_container_5744f | Fresh (preferably less than 24h old)No preservative to be added.Store at 4°C if unable to transport immediately  | Esky with ice bricks | FM116 Faecal request form |
| Food pathogen screen and identification | Food | 200g (absolute minimum 35g) | Original food containerSterile bag (sealed well to prevent leaks)Sterile container with lid | Store at 4°C if unable to transport immediately | Esky with ice bricks | FM118 Food request form |
| Water pathogen screen and identification | Waters | 250ml (routine testing taps, pools)1 litre (pathogen testing Salmonella, Campylobacter etc) | **Chlorinated waters** - Sterile bacteriological sampling bottles, containing sodium thiosulphate to neutralize any chlorine in the water must be usedOther waters: Sterile sampling bottle | Ideally, samples should be submitted within 6 hours of collection. They may be examined up to 24 hours after collection, provided they are kept cool (2-10oC) and in the dark.  | Esky with ice bricks | FM117 Water Request form |
| Serology testingDiphtheria /Tetanus Yersinia and Amoebic serology | Serum | 1ml | Sterile tube or serum separator tube | Only fresh non-inactivated sera (Hyperlipaemic, haemolytic, microbially contaminated and turbid sera MUST not be submitted ) |  |  |

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| **Test type** | **Sample type** | **Minimum amount**  | **Container type** | **Special Instructions** | **Transport**  | **Request form** |
| Strain typing or relatedness (Whole genome sequencing) | Bacterial cultures | Not applicable | Culture on plate or agar slope  | Pure culture must be prepared from a single colony on non-selective agar or slope.Ensure plate/broth is sealed with parafilm (or equivalent) and placed inside a biohazard bagEnsure associated paperwork is in the external pocket and not placed in with the samplePhone MDU to discuss requirements before sending | Room temperature | FM2634 |
| DNA | 50ul | Screw cap sterile microfuge tube | Sample must not contain EDTA in the buffer.Phone MDU to discuss requirements before sending  | Esky with ice bricks | FM2673 |
| SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic samples | Nasopharangeal swabs, oropharyngeal swabs, nasal, midturbinate, nasal/nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate in VTM/UTM, saline, Liquid Amies or STM | 1ml | Screw cap tube |  | Room temp | Test Tracker e-order or FM2845 |
| SARS-CoV-2 positive samples for WGS | Nasopharangeal swabs, oropharyngeal swabs, nasal, midturbinate, nasal/nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate in VTM/UTM, saline, Liquid Amies or STM | 1ml | Screw cap tube | Please ensure sample tube has been tightly closed to prevent leaking | Room temp | Preferably access the Test Tracker e-order barcode. Alternatively use FM2935 or FM2936 for healthcare workers |