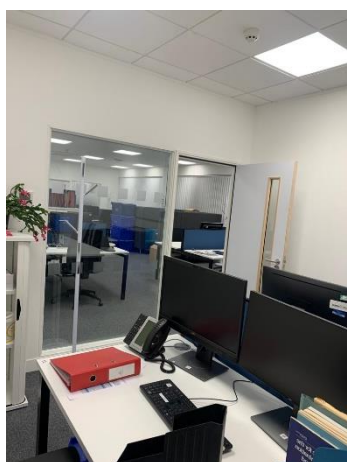


## Re-registration 2022

Welcome to this re-registration newsletter for 2022. The participation year will run from April 2022 until the end of March 2023. We need to confirm your requirements for UK NEQAS services in the coming year and confirm your contact details. As in previous years, we will email your laboratory's main contact with a link to the re-registration information, including our distribution schedules and price lists for the year. Re-registration is online and the email will contain details of how to log-in. The re-registration website will open on February 16<sup>th</sup> for individual participants and close approximately three weeks later, on March 11<sup>th</sup>. Participants who register through a central agent or distributor do not need to complete a re-registration entry, as this will be confirmed by your agent. If you have any questions or concerns, contact our Administration team on 01923 587111.

## Relocation, relocation, relocation



We relocated our offices and laboratory in November, moving from our accommodation of 25 years at Watford General Hospital to a refurbished building on a nearby business park, which we occupy with UK NEQAS Blood Transfusion Laboratory Practice. We remain a part of the West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust, but the move has been necessary as part of the redevelopment of the Watford Hospital site. Our PO Box address remains the same, but the telephone number has changed.



**Phone: +44 (0)1923 587111**

**FAX +44 (0)1923 307307**

**Emails: [gadmin@ukneqas.org.uk](mailto:gadmin@ukneqas.org.uk) (Administration) or**

**[haem@ukneqas.org.uk](mailto:haem@ukneqas.org.uk) (Scientific team)**

## Staff changes

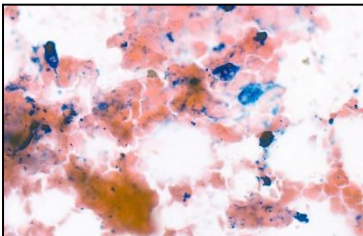
2021 saw changes to the UK NEQAS Haematology team. Andrea Teuchert replaced Jon Sims as Morphology Lead Scientist and Bashori Rahman replaced Duljeet Chohan as Haemoglobinopathy Lead Scientist. Jazmin Brooks and Sally Burley joined as associate practitioners (Sally transferred from our packing team), Mathew Thomas and Jack Toland joined our packing team. The Admin team also saw some changes and you may now speak

to Lisa Watkins-Price (Deputy Office Manager) and Klaudia Csokona or Asha David. We welcome our new colleagues and thank the team members they have replaced for their support and hard work.

## Automated Counting programmes

The major update in automated counting has been the extension of the Automated Differential Leucocyte Counting (ADLC) programme to include nucleated red cell counting for matrices E, J and C (where instruments provide a NRBC result). This development has been rolled out progressively over the year and will be reviewed with the Automated Counting SAG (GSAG) in March 2022. The scores produced for this parameter are for shadow purposes only at present and we need to review how to manage survey material batches without NRBC present. Other work in hand has included trialling whole blood materials for Alifax ESR technology, extension of the closing date for POCT Hb testing, pre-pilot exercises for reticulocyte Hb parameters and introduction of scoring for the Infectious Mononucleosis (MN) programme as the final part of the development of the programme. Details of the Infectious Mononucleosis programme scoring were provided in an update webinar given on October 21<sup>st</sup>.

## Morphology programmes



Participants in the Haemosiderin (Cytochemistry) programme will have seen the first of our digital slides for interpretation of haemosiderin staining. This is a work in progress that has been implemented because of the challenges in obtaining sufficient, good quality bone marrow slides. Thank you for your feedback on the work so far, which will continue for the coming year. We apologise that this will mean that the distributions made will vary from published Haemosiderin schedule.

We are also trialling the assessment of differential counting by automated cell identification systems, such as those marketed by CellaVision, in the Blood Films for Manual Differential Counting programme. This assessment is on a shadow basis only. If you are interested in learning more or taking part, please contact Andrea ([andrea.teuchert@nhs.net](mailto:andrea.teuchert@nhs.net)).

## Digital morphology

The Digital Morphology for CPD programme has over 4,000 individual registrations and continues to run 6 cases per year. We thank Dr John Burthem and Dr Michelle Brereton for their continued work in this programme. We are working to add individual cell

identification to the system to the programme and a new module with additional clinical details for medical staff and other practitioners who report blood films.

## Special Haematology programmes

A Task and Finish Group has been working on the development of scoring for interpretation in the Abnormal Haemoglobins programme, which we will be testing with a small number of participants in coming months. In addition, we have reviewed the scoring of Hb S% with programme advisors, who have suggested that we adjust the scoring to identify those laboratories who are consistently more than 3% from the expected result. This amendment is being modelled for implementation by distribution 2202AH (April).

Laboratories who undertake G6PD quantitative assay at temperatures other than 37°C are now so few that we are unable to provide performance statistics for the temperature group. As a consequence, these results are being converted post-submission to the equivalent result at 37°C for performance scoring. These participants will see an apparently different result in their report from the one they submitted. Please contact Bashori Rahman ([bashori.rahman@nhs.net](mailto:bashori.rahman@nhs.net)) if you would like more information.

## UK NEQAS Haematology needs you!

UK NEQAS Haematology relies on the expertise of the Steering Committee and specialist Scientific Advisory Groups (SAGs), who provide advice, feedback and ideas to develop our services. We are always looking for new recruits. You do not have to be a national or international 'expert' in the field: we need representatives of our service users with an interest in laboratory haematology and an enthusiasm for the role of EQA in patient care. The SAGs operate in three areas: Automated Counting, Haemoglobinopathies and Morphology. We are keen to recruit to the Automated Counting SAG, especially if you are a Beckman Coulter user, but all expressions of interest are welcome. The time commitment is relatively small, comprising attendance at a couple of meetings annually, participation in occasional Task and Finish Groups and review of documentation. In return, you will be invited to the Annual Participants' meeting (including accommodation) as our guest. If you are interested or would like to know more, contact Barbara De la Salle (01923 587111 or [barbara.delasalle@nhs.net](mailto:barbara.delasalle@nhs.net)). Don't be afraid to ask or think you have nothing to offer!

## Steering Committee and Scientific Advisory Group changes

Dr Kate Ryan, Dr Steve Keeney, Dr Neha Bhatnagar and Dr John Lambert retired as advisors during the year. We thank them for their support and work and wish them well for the future. Dr Clare Samuelson has replaced Dr Keeney as Chair of the Special SAG. Michael

Wright, Juswal Dadhra and Kinal Amin (for the automated counting SAG), Amanda Hann, Jennifer Eglington-Harris and Megan Sutherland (for the Special SAG) joined us and we look forward to working with them in the future.

Many participants will be aware of the passing of Professor Samuel (Sam) Machin on October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021. Sam was Chair of the UK NEQAS Haematology from 2006-2009 and his support of the Scheme was much valued.

## Morphology champions

We could not operate without the Morphology Champions, who supply specimens for the Blood Films for Morphology programme. The star players this year have been Dianne Hutchens and colleagues at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich, from the East and South East London Pathology Partnership. We are interested in any cases that offer educational interest in blood film morphology. These do not have to be rare conditions and cases that are seen regularly in the lab are also needed. Contact Andrea ([andrea.teuchert@nhs.net](mailto:andrea.teuchert@nhs.net)) if you would like to know more. Like everything else, the rewards are small but you will be contributing to the service and we send chocolates from time to time.

## Annual meeting and webinars



2022 will be 'third time lucky' for the participants' meeting planned for the Titanic Hotel in Liverpool. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> with the conference dinner on the previous evening. Many laboratories still have meeting bookings carried over from 2020, which will be shown on your re-registration page. We replaced the annual meeting with two successful webinar

series in 2021 and this is a format that we will use again, as it is appreciated by participants, who may not be able to justify the time and cost of travel to a full day meeting. Our most popular webinar topics focused on case reviews with our expert morphology panel.

## ISO17043 accreditation

The UK NEQAS Haematology and Transfusion scope of accreditation is available for review at <https://www.ukas.com/> under centre number 7805. The Infectious Mononucleosis programme has been submitted for addition to the scope of accreditation with the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS).