



The Association for Clinical Biochemistry

Position Statement in response to the Government's Budget Statement 22-06-2010

The Association recognises the need for reductions in public expenditure and welcomes, despite this, the Government's wish to protect the quality of NHS care and services. We will continue to do all we can to identify and implement efficiencies in Laboratory Medicine without adverse effects on the quality of the advice given to doctors by clinical scientists and on the accuracy, reliability and interpretation of the results of laboratory tests.

The ACB supports quality, innovation, appropriate testing and expertise in the use of pathology tests. In such challenging times the savings required could have a negative impact on clinical services. Clinical scientists and healthcare scientists, are leaders in innovation, problem solving, and research in the application and appropriate use of better tests. Our members are therefore ideally placed to identify efficiencies that will minimise any negative impact.

The Department of Health itself has already noted that 70% of clinical decisions involve the advice and tests delivered or supervised by our members, both medical and scientific. Achieving the savings needed whilst minimising the negative impact on individual patients will be challenging. We will contribute to the development of the quality and outcome measures and standards of service to be maintained in order to avoid the dangers of a "slash and burn" approach to savings.

The ACB stands for high quality clinical services supported by well assessed scientific evidence, delivered by those properly qualified to make the necessary decisions efficiently and effectively and with close dialogue with service commissioners, doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals in hospital and general practice who use our services. In this way we can ensure that the right tests are done on the right patient at the right time with the right decisions following from them.

Dr Julian Barth

President, ACB

Notes:

1. The Association for Clinical Biochemistry is the professional body supporting clinical and healthcare life sciences in pathology, in particular clinical and metabolic biochemistry, immunology and microbiology.
2. Further information can be obtained by contacting the ACB administrative office at 130-132 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2TU, tel: 020 7403 8006, e-mail enquiries@acb.org.uk