



The Association for Clinical Biochemistry

PRESS RELEASE

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Association for Clinical Biochemistry Response to Darzi Report

The Association for Clinical Biochemistry (ACB) welcomes the opportunities identified in the Darzi report for the delivery of Laboratory Medicine services in new ways. We agree wholeheartedly that Quality must be a major imperative in service delivery, however delivered. We support the recognition that patient empowerment is an important consideration, which should be developed around engagement of patients with the Laboratory Medicine service. We believe this should include the delivery of results to the patients in a form that suits them personally. This could range from electronic mail, through web based services like "My Health Space" to letters delivered by post.

The ACB knows that laboratories can deliver many results within three hours of receiving the blood samples. In the context of Patient Focused Care the service paradigm we would recommend would build on electronic requesting and reporting coupled with locally (to the patient) based phlebotomy services¹ and sample transport facilities. Patients would be given direct access to their own results coupled with information concerning the reasons for testing and the meaning of the results, such as is already provided by Labtestsonline (UK) web-site [www.labtestsonline.org.uk] supported by the ACB.

Testing at the Point of Care (POC) is an attractive option as noted on page 20 of the report when considering patient satisfaction; this is appropriate in the relevant context, provided that the additional resource implications are recognised, and with access to sound knowledge support. The development of such services also needs to be commensurate with the clinical governance structures and provide the necessary quality and consistency to ensure patient safety.

The ACB believes that these new approaches to the NHS will enable better, patient focused Laboratory Medicine to be practised.

¹ Phlebotomy services – the collection of blood samples from patients in carefully controlled environments to ensure that they are suitable for analysis in the laboratory.

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The Association for Clinical Biochemistry (ACB), founded in 1953, is a professional body dedicated to the practise and promotion of clinical science and laboratory medicine and has medical and non-medical members in all major UK healthcare laboratories, many university departments and several commercial companies. It has a relationship with the clinical diagnostics industry through links with its Corporate Members. The Association liaises with, and is consulted by, many national and international organisations on issues relating to Clinical Biochemistry. It was instrumental in establishing accreditation for clinical scientists in all disciplines and administers accreditation in all disciplines through the Association of Clinical Scientists. It also plays a significant role in the training of Clinical Scientists in the Biochemistry discipline and its training framework is used by other disciplines.