Microbiology Laboratory

Ipswich Hospital

Heath Road

Ipswich

IP4 5PD

**East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust**

**Latent TB Service Improvement (Ipswich)**

Dear Colleagues, Clinicians and Healthcare Professionals,

27 November 2023 Microbiology (Ipswich) will be changing the test for Latent Mycobacteria tuberculosis from the T-Spot assay to the Quantiferon Gold Plus Assay. This change will allow us to repatriate this assay back into ESNEFT. This will be enable Microbiology to provide a responsive patient centric service with improved turnaround times.

A similar service change will be made in the coming weeks for Colchester Hospital and further comms will be sent when this occurs

The technical basis of the Quantiferon assay is very similar to that of the T-Spot assay; they both detect Interferon Gamma IFN- ÿ that detects effector T-Cells that are stimulated by *Mycobacteria tuberculosis* antigens.

This assay has the ability to be used in all current T-Spot assay for the detection of latent infection as part of an infection screen or prior to the use immunosuppressive therapies

**Sample Requesting:**

Electronically on ICE: `**QuantiFERON QFT Gold`** and with code 5316 as requested

Manual Requests:

**Quantiferon assay**

**Sample Requirements:** Samples will remain as 2 x 7.5ml Lithium Heparin (Orange tubes). Delivered to the laboratory by 13.00 Monday to Thursday excluding Bank Holidays. Any samples received outside the mentioned days will be rejected.

**Expected Results**

For most samples, there will be 3 possible results;

**Positive** *M. tuberculosis* infection likely

**Negative**  *M. tuberculosis* infection NOT likely

**Indeterminate** Likelihood of *M. tuberculosis* infection cannot be determined

In most cases, the interpretation of the Quantiferon result should be the same as that of the current T-Sport result.

For all other queries, please contact the laboratory on ext. 5750.

Kindest regards

Peter Hitchcock

Microbiology Service Lead