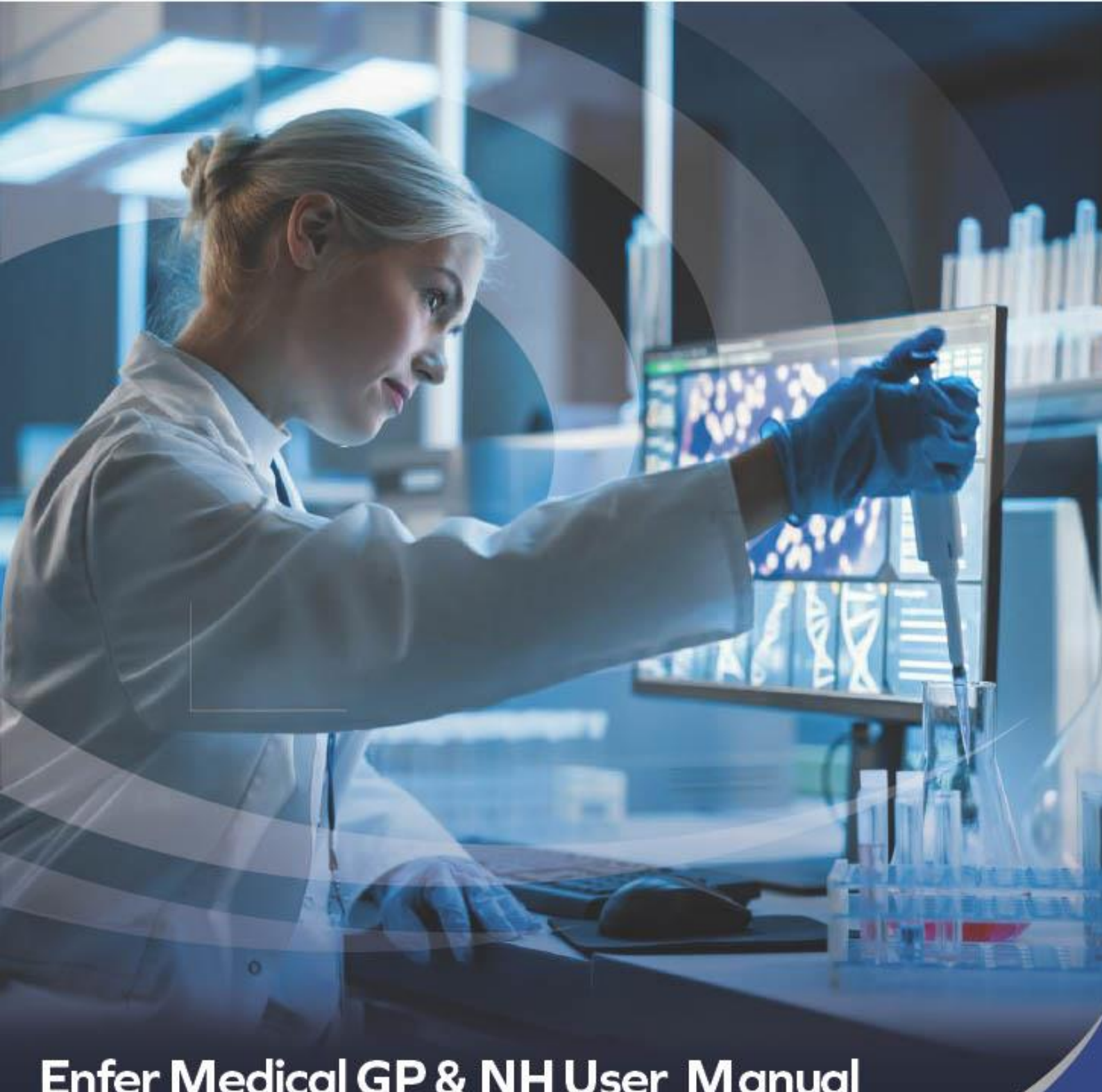

Enfer Medical GP & NH User Manual

June 2026

enfer Medical

Here for a Healthier World

www.enfermedical.ie

Contents

FOREWORD

Enfer Medical provides a clinical diagnostic laboratory service in the specialities of clinical chemistry, haematology, microbiology, immunology, virology, and genomics. Our service is available to all public and private hospital laboratories, general practitioners, and clinicians from private services throughout Ireland. The laboratory is consultant-led, patient-centred, and quality-focused. A clinical advisory service is available for healthcare professionals and includes advice on the interpretation of individual patient results and appropriate patient management pathways.

The Enfer Medical team works to the highest possible standards in all aspects of the company's business. We subscribe to both ISO 15189:2022 international standard of accreditation and the highest standards of continuous professional development to maintain excellence in all our undertakings. In December 2021, we were awarded our INAB (Irish National Accreditation Board) certificate, registration number 395MT, and we are accredited to the ISO 15189:2022 standard as a medical testing laboratory. We are strongly committed to service development and to the provision of innovative testing solutions for our users.

Our list of accredited tests is detailed in our INAB Schedule of accreditation, and this, alongside our accreditation certificate, are both available on our website (https://www.enfermedical.ie/enfer-medical-accreditation/). The schedule provides details on the test or assay used, specimen types, equipment or technique, and the relevant procedure number in use.

Rosemary Curran
Medical Director

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Enfer Medical is committed to being the most accessible and efficient clinical diagnostic laboratory service in Ireland. Our goal is always to provide a high level of service to our colleagues in the health services, on behalf of their patients. We are clinically led and patient focused. We strive to continually improve our operational expertise, responding to the needs of our users and providing innovative testing solutions.

The Enfer Medical team works to the highest possible standards in all aspects of the company's business. We subscribe to ISO 15189:2022 international standard of accreditation and are accredited by the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) for medical testing. We are strongly committed to service development and the continuous professional development of our team to maintain excellence in all our undertakings.

The purpose of this manual is to act as a reference guide for the provision of a quality service to General Practitioners (GPs) and for their patients, operating and residing, primarily, within their respective catchment areas. Specimens are processed from the agreed patient demographic.

GPs requiring access to services at Enfer Medical should reside within the designated Hospital HSE catchment areas for their designated hospital and can only request the service as agreed with their catchment hospital.

GPs requiring access to services that are outside the scope of general practice are required to contact their designated catchment area hospital, as this is not included in the testing service at Enfer Medical.

Included in the manual are details about the scope of service, requirements from GPs, range of tests available, expected turnaround times, our location, hours of operation, contact details for key personnel, availability of clinical advice, and other relevant information to allow users to easily access our services.

Clients will be immediately notified of any changes to testing that may impact ongoing testing. We also provide updates to changes on the schedule of accreditation through our website. Enfer Medical is committed to the sustained innovation of our services through continuous quality improvement, which may include formal academic research and the evaluation of novel approaches aimed at improving the health of patients and the wellbeing of the wider population.

Contact Us:
Enfer Medical,
Unit T, M7 Business Park,
Newhall,
Naas,
Co. Kildare,
Ireland,
W91FD74
Tel: + 353 45 819 000

Email:
Client Services : clientqueries@enfermedical.ie
Clinical Queries : gpclinicalqueries@healthmail.ie

Website: www.enfermedical.ie

2.0 ENFER MEDICAL SUPPORTING GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Enfer Medical is committed to providing a quality service to General Practitioners (GPs) and for their patients. The defined timelines for the delivery and receipt of patient GP specimens collected by General Practitioner services for testing in Enfer Medical are Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm.

The current test repertoire available to General Practitioners is determined by the laboratory consultants in your Hospital Catchment Area, based on best practice guidelines, including the requirements of national programmes.

The aim of this manual is to:

1. Provide guidance to General Practitioners on the procedures and standards required to ensure a safe and effective laboratory service.
2. Define the laboratory investigations routinely available to GPs.
3. Outline the standard requirements from GPs in the receipt of the laboratory services.

The approved test list available to General Practitioners in your catchment area can be found on your dedicated Enfer Medical Webpage. Information on individual tests can be found HERE and on www.enfermedical.ie.

The laboratory at Enfer Medical processes and tests specimens from 08:00 AM to 10:00 PM Monday to Friday and between 09:00 AM and 14:00 PM on Saturdays. This ensures a prompt turnaround for all test results.

2.1 RESULTS AND REPORTING

Laboratory results will be reported within specified turnaround times and should be interpreted by the requesting clinician. Any amendments to original reports will be highlighted to users. Staff authorising results are competency assessed. Medical staff meet the professional standards & legal requirements set by the Irish Medical Council. Service users will receive reports as agreed and described in the Service Level Agreement with Enfer Medical. Reporting options for GPs is via **Healthlinks** which provides a web-based messaging service which enables the secure transmission of clinical patient information between Hospitals, Health Care Agencies and General Practitioners. Enfer Medical has a secure connection in place. For any GP with an active Healthlink account, results will be transmitted securely in HL7 format to Healthlink which are then made available to the GP practice system.

3.0 STANDARD REQUIREMENTS FROM GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Enfer Medical operates a normal service between 8am and 10pm weekdays and 08:00 to 14:00 on Saturdays. All GP practitioners are responsible for developing a system whereby test results returned from Enfer Medical are examined and appropriate action is taken in a timely manner.

Enfer Medical requires a register of General Practitioners (GPs) and all health care professionals and services who send specimens to the laboratory, including details of the appropriate contact number for transmission of critical results, this includes out of hours contacts.

3.1 PROVISION OF EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS FOR REPORTING OF "CRITICAL RESULTS" OUTSIDE NORMAL PRACTICE HOURS

It is recognised that occasionally, unexpected critically abnormal results are found on analysis, such that laboratory staff become aware of a potential emergency before the treating General

Practitioners. In these circumstances, laboratory staff must follow procedures to contact the requesting GP to relay the result.

Please review the *Enfer Medical Critical Results Guide and Procedure* for specific results which is located HERE, within the Clinical Resources webpage for service users. The critical result thresholds outlined in the guide are based on consultant clinical recommendations and are aligned to the principles of the HSE document "*Communication of Laboratory Results Likely to Require Urgent Action - Version 1".* In addition, for tests referred to external referral laboratories, the relevant critical alert guides have been reviewed to ensure timely and appropriate clinical responses.

Enfer Medical supports the communication of critical results to GP practices and requesting Hospitals and follows these general steps:

1. *Routine Hours Reporting:*
   Critical results are reported directly to GP practices during their routine operating hours (Monday to Friday, (9:00 am to 6:00 pm) using the contact details provided by the practice.

2. *Out-of-Hours Reporting for Critical results:*
   All General Practitioners requiring laboratory medicine services **MUST** provide contact details for the reporting of "critical" results outside normal practice hours *(Reference: "Communication of Laboratory Results Likely to Require Urgent Action - Version 1").* **THIS IS A REQUIREMENT FOR ACCESS TO HSE APPROVED LABORATORY SERVICES PROVIDED BY ENFER MEDICAL.**

   GP practices are responsible for establishing an agreed pathway for out-of-hours critical result communication. This may include direct contact to be provided to Enfer Medical via a designated mobile number or through an agreement with a proxy agency, for example Northeast Doc On Call (NEDOC). Where a proxy agency e.g. NEDOC is used by a GP Service, arrangements must be made between the relevant parties to ensure that markedly abnormal results can be telephoned directly to the agency, without complication and that follow-up action can occur. This is a critical clinical risk management issue for all parties concerned. It is important to note that the recording of the patient's phone number on the request form will assist communication between parties.

   IMPORTANT: Enfer Medical will follow the agreed protocol for out-of-hours reporting. In line with the updated Communication of Laboratory Results document referenced above, please note that where the laboratory is unable to contact the requesting clinician outside of GP practice hours or where the out of hours service is not in a position to receive the critical result, additional electronic means of communication via Healthmail will be utilised, with a follow-up telephone call on the next working day.

   Additionally, where "Out of Hours Contact Information" is not provided by GPs referring patient specimens for testing at Enfer Medical and where Enfer Medical cannot fulfil its' obligation to report a critical result in accordance with statutory requirements, then referring GPs acknowledge and accept that Enfer Medical, will have no choice but to record all attempts at reporting the critical result, including the use of additional electronic means of communication via Healthmail, with a follow-up telephone call on the next working day. The referring GP shall be responsible for the receiving of these critical results and any delays arising.

3. *Documentation:*
   Enfer Medical will document all critical result communication, including the date, time, individuals involved, results conveyed, verification of communication accuracy, and any challenges encountered during notification.

By adhering to agreed protocols and documenting all actions taken, Enfer Medical ensures a robust and reliable process for managing critical results in collaboration with GP practices and Hospital laboratories.

IMPORTANT: While Enfer Medical supports the communication pathways for critical results, the responsibilities and agreements with GP practices and proxy agencies lie with the respective parties. Enfer Medical remains a facilitating partner to ensure smooth and effective communication of critical results.

3.2 CRITERIA REQUIRED FOR LABELLING PATIENT SPECIMENS

The use of printed labels produced by the GP practice management system, tailored to the specimen container size, is the preferred labelling method as it enhances the accuracy and legibility of information.

We have outlined below, both mandatory and desirable criteria for the labelling of patient specimens.

MANDATORY:

All specimens, including the specimen container, **must be** labelled with the following minimum dataset:

- **Patient's Full Name:** Surname and forename must be clearly identified. Please note that addressograph/patient labels must clearly differentiate between the patient's surname and forename.
- **Patient's Date of Birth**
- **Date of Collection:** The date when the specimen was collected.
- **Time of Collection:** The time of collection is a mandatory requirement to determine specimen integrity and of importance also for self-collected specimens such as stool specimens.

DESIRABLE:

- **Sex at Birth:** Particularly important where investigations have gender-related reference ranges (e.g., hormone testing).
- **Specimen Type or Site:** For non-blood specimens (e.g., MSU, Ear Swab).

Important: Kindly note that incomplete labelling requirements or where minimum criteria are not met, this may lead to specimen rejection. This could result in the need for a repeat specimen, potentially causing inconvenience to patients and delaying results. Enfer Medical has developed a schedule of Specimen Receipt Anomalies (SRAs), describing the scenarios in which testing analysis may be affected and/specimens may be rejected, these can be reviewed HERE. This Schedule of SRAs also outlines scenarios in which testing proceeds, but where test comments are included with results. We appreciate your attention to ensuring all forms are fully completed to avoid any disruptions.

3.3 CRITERIA REQUIRED FOR PATIENT REQUEST FORMS

We respectfully request that the Request Form accompanying the specimen/specimen, be legibly completed. The legibility of the request form is crucial to ensure accurate patient details. For manual forms, the use of block capitals or a clearly typed form is recommended to reduce errors in patient

identification, test selection, or location. Writing should be in ballpoint pen (not marker) to ensure the information is copied through to each sheet of the request form.

For manual forms the use of the GP Practice stamp and printed sticker are best practice when completing patient request forms.

We have outlined below, both mandatory and additional information required for the completion of patient request forms.

MANDATORY: The Request Form must include the following minimum dataset:

- **Patient's Full Name:** Forename and surname.
- **Patient's Date of Birth:** DD/MM/YYYY.
- **Patient's Address:** This is a mandatory field required for Healthlink result transfer.
- **Sex at Birth:** Especially relevant where Male or Female are significant when tests have sex specific reference ranges.
- **Date of Collection:** The date when the specimen was collected.
- **Time of Collection:** Required to assess stability of the specimen for testing.
- **Requesting Doctor's Name and MCRN:** Used as the destination for the report (GP practice stamp and sticker are very welcome).
- **Name, Phone Number and Full address for the referring Clinician/Clinic.**
- **Specimen Type/Site:** Mandatory for all non-blood specimens (e.g., Ear Swab, MSU)
- **Laboratory Test Required:** Please refer to 'Approved Test List' available in your catchment area. This is available on your dedicated Enfer Medical webpage. This consistency is crucial for our specimen reception team to accurately match incoming specimens with the correct tests, reducing delays and minimising errors during intake. In situations where there is uncertainty regarding the requested test name then testing will be put on hold pending clarification with the requesting GP.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED:

- **Patient's Clinical Details and Relevant History:** Including drug, anticoagulant, or antibiotic therapy, to aid in the interpretation of results.
- **Patient Preparation Conditions:** Such as fasting.
- **Out of Hours Contact Details:** for the reporting of critical results.

Certain investigations may require additional information on the specimen or request form, and we encourage GPs to provide ALL relevant clinical information where available.

IMPORTANT:

1. To ensure unequivocal identification, samples and request forms **MUST** contain the minimum essential identification criteria. If sufficient information is not provided to ensure unequivocal traceability, samples may be rejected without analysis or referred back to the requesting practitioner.
2. Patient consent for laboratory investigations is the responsibility of the requesting doctor, and this is included in the Service Level agreements (SLA) agreed with clients. It is the

responsibility of the referring clinician to ensure that the information provided on the Patient Request Form is up to date and accurate and to ensure that all necessary consents have been obtained for the performance of analysis to facilitate diagnosis and treatment.

3. High Risk Samples should be clearly identified on the form and individually packed separately from other samples. **Hazard Group 4** pathogens should not be sent to the laboratory – please contact the National Isolation Unit at Mater Hospital for advice on where to send samples which are from patients with a suspicion of a group 4 highly pathogenic infectious disease.

3.4 CRITERIA REQUIRED FOR SENDING URGENT SPECIMENS *(Blood Sciences Only)*

It is important to follow specific steps to ensure quick identification and efficient handling by the laboratory. The following guidelines will help prioritise your samples and ensure that all necessary information is clearly communicated:

- Clearly mark both the specimen(s) and the patient request form as **URGENT**.
- Confirm all information on the label and request form is complete and legible, verifying test names are accurate.
- **PROVIDE THE CLINICAL REASON FOR THE URGENT REQUEST IN ADDITION TO OUT OF HOURS CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE REFERRING CLINICIAN ON THE REQUEST FORM. IN THE ABSENCE OF EITHER, SPECIMENS WILL BE PROCESSED AS ROUTINE REQUESTS.**
- Place the specimen and patient request form into the provided **RED URGENT SPECIMEN BAG** for easy identification.
- **NOTIFY** the laboratory of the urgent status upon collection to help expedite processing. Email or call Enfer Medical on 353 (0)45 819000 or gpclinicalqueries@healthmail.ie to notify the lab about incoming urgent samples for immediate patient management; this is an **essential** requirement to enable the laboratory to prioritise testing.

3.5 PROTOCOLS FOR 24-HOUR STABILITY AND SAME-DAY URGENT SPECIMEN PROCESSING

IMPORTANT: PLEASE NOTE THAT A NUMBER OF TESTS HAVE A 24-HOUR STABILITY AND FOR GPs WHO DO NOT HAVE A DAILY COLLECTION OF SPECIMENS FROM HSE PRIMARY CARE LOGISTICS, THEN WE KINDLY ADVISE THAT TESTS WITH A 24 HOUR STABILITY ARE ONLY CARRIED OUT ON DAYS THAT SPECIMENS ARE COLLECTED FOR DELIVERY TO THE LABORATORY. PLEASE REFER TO OUR 'SAMPLE COLLECTION GUIDANCE FOR APPROVED SERVICES' HERE FOR DETAILS OF SAME.

COAGULATION TEST PROTOCOLS FOR SAME-DAY PROCESSING

At Enfer Medical, we recognise the importance of timely warfarin dosing in patient care. To support GPs in delivering effective treatment, coagulation requests, including Prothrombin Time (PT) and International Normalised Ratio (INR), will be processed on the same day they are received.

NOTE: To facilitate same, it is essential that the process for requesting urgent specimen analysis as outlined above is adhered to when submitting Coagulation specimens.

By following these guidelines, you will help ensure that coagulation tests are prioritised and processed promptly, allowing for timely patient management and critical decision-making, such as adjusting warfarin doses within the required 24-hour window.

POTASSIUM TESTING - SAMPLE COLLECTION AND PROCESSING CRITERIA

Potassium testing requires careful attention to timing due to its short stability i.e. the sample must be tested within 4 hours of sample collection time, as it is unstable beyond this point. Given the time delay between sample collection times and the delivery of samples to Enfer Medical, Enfer Medical in the majority of cases will not be in position to provide a potassium test.

Enfer Medical can process a request for Potassium provided the instructions below are adhered to:

Instructions for Potassium Testing and Sample Handling

Timing and Stability:

- Potassium samples are highly time-sensitive and must be tested within 4 hours of sample collection.
- Samples that are not tested within this 4-hour window will be considered unstable and cannot be processed at Enfer Medical.

Centrifugation Criteria (to extend testing window):

If centrifuging the sample within 4 hours of collection, it can be processed at Enfer Medical, provided the following conditions are met:

- The sample must be centrifuged at 3500rpm for 10 minutes.
- This procedure helps to preserve the stability of the sample, extending the testing window and allowing the potassium test to be performed beyond the initial 4-hour period.

Documentation Requirements:

It is critical to include the following details on the PRF (Patient Request Form) to ensure the sample meets testing criteria:

- Centrifuge Speed (3500rpm)
- Centrifuge Duration (10 minutes)
- Time of Centrifugation (specific time the centrifugation process was completed)

NOTE: It is essential that the process for requesting urgent specimen analysis as outlined above is adhered to when submitting requests for potassium analysis.

Requests for additional tests:

If sample type and volume allow, further testing can be requested by telephone +353 (0)45 819000 and by email to gpclinicalqueries@healthmail.ie. Please do not send any patient identifiable information to any other email address. Please specify the test details to be added, together with your request for specific further analysis. Clinical and/or laboratory staff will advise on the ability to undertake further testing from samples already received in the laboratory.

4.0 SPECIMEN PACKAGING & TRANSPORT

The results obtained for testing of samples are based upon the quality of the sample(s) as they are received at the laboratory. Samples must arrive safely and securely in a prompt manner. Clients are recommended to follow ISO20658:2023 requirements for the collection and transport of samples for medical laboratory examinations.

ENFER MEDICAL A3 PRACTICE BAG:

Enfer Medical provides GP Practices and Nursing homes with A3 Pathoseal 95 Outer Bags in addition to Practice ID Barcode Labels (where applicable) to be used for specimens being processed at Enfer Medical. Please see example of bags and labels below.

These bags **must be** used for Enfer Medical specimens and are an addition to GPs current packaging procedures and do not replace them. It is the responsibility of the sender to comply with national regulations for the packaging/preparation of samples for delivery to the laboratory and adherence to safe transport of biological materials. Please consult the HSE guidance which can be found on our website HERE.

The large outer specimen bags with specimens contained within, should be sealed and provided to your courier/HSE logistics for sample transport. Adherence to this process will help to ensure a smooth and efficient process for proper specimen segregation, labelling, and transportation of specimens to GP Catchment Hospitals.

NB: samples destined for testing at the Catchment Hospital Laboratory should **not be** packaged in the A3 specimen bags provided by Enfer Medical but must be packaged separately from Enfer Medical samples. Ensuring proper separation is essential to guarantee correct routing and timely processing of all blood samples.

TRANSPORT:

GPs currently receive dedicated logistics support through a variety of arrangements which can include HSE Primary Care logistics, and external couriers to collect and transport specimens from GP practices to their Hospital Catchment Laboratory. To ensure the timely processing and integrity of specimens, specimens are collected at regular intervals from GPs Hospital Catchment Laboratory for delivery to Enfer Medical in Naas, typically early afternoon and early evening.

5.0 PRE-ANALYTICAL GUIDANCE

Factors affecting test results – Specimen Stability:

Serum specimens which are highly haemolysed, or hyperlipaemic should not be sent to the laboratory. Please refer to our Sample Collection Guidance for Approved Services which can be found HERE.

In the absence of daily specimen pick-up from individual GP practices by the HSE Primary Care logistics team, specimens sent to Enfer Medical may have been taken some time prior to their arrival at the laboratory. This could potentially lead to stability issues, which may affect the accuracy and reliability of the test results.

It is crucial that GPs refer to the Enfer Medical Stability Guide referred to above to ensure that specimens remain stable and suitable for testing, particularly for those with stabilities under 24-48 hours.

Proper adherence to these guidelines helps to maintain the quality and integrity of the specimens during transportation and processing.

Criteria for rejection of specimens:

In rare cases specimens may not be suitable for testing on arrival to the laboratory. In that case the sample will be rejected at the receipt stage, and the service user will be notified immediately and an explanation as to why the sample could not be processed will be provided. Reasons why samples maybe rejected include but are not limited to:

- Samples received beyond the stability limits and/or not at the correct temperature indicated for each test.
- Incorrect sample type received.
- Leaking samples, sample not received or sample insufficient for analysis.
- Non-compliant samples or request forms, i.e., those missing sample date information, missing sample test request and/or missing sample site/type information.
- Samples received without the necessary patient identifiers.
- Problems during transport of samples where the sample is compromised.

The laboratory reports SRAs (Sample Receipt Anomalies) in a timely manner after identification of an issue, this is to facilitate prompt recall of patients if required. Our full list of SRA codes and reasons for rejection can be found HERE.

6.0 COMMUNICATION

Client Services Support

- Enfer Medical is committed to providing a seamless and responsive experience for our clients, including General Practitioners.
- The Client Service Team at Enfer Medical plays a central role in this process, triaging queries in real-time to the appropriate personnel. This enables us to address inquiries as efficiently as possible, aligning with our dedication to exceptional client service. We understand the importance of timely and accurate information, and our commitment to real-time query management reflects our ongoing efforts to exceed client expectations.
- A telephone service for healthcare professionals is available from 08:00 to 20:00 each working day and from 09.00 to 14.00 on a Saturday. All enquiries to the laboratory shall be dealt with promptly by the client services team with referral to a member of the laboratory, commercial or clinical team where appropriate.

  Tel no. details: +353 (0) 45 819 000

- Additional communication is facilitated through the ENFER MEDICAL website and by direct contact with the laboratory.
- In the event an urgent report is required, the GP must alert the laboratory by telephone/by email at gpclinicalqueries@healthmail.ie and state the nature of the urgency and must ensure it is clearly indicated on the Request Form. Additionally, the out of hours contact details for the referring clinician must be included in the Request Form.
- Phoning the laboratory for results: Please contact the Client Services team at 353 (0) 45 819 000.

Key Laboratory Personnel

Position	Name
Medical Director	Dr Rosemary Curran
Operations Director	Dr Paul Simmons
Consultant Chemical Pathologist	Prof. Carel Le Roux
Consultant Microbiologist	Dr Rosemary Curran
Consultant Haematologist	Dr Saad Ahmed
Quality Manager	Margaret Buggy
Laboratory Manager	Jonny Finnegan
Laboratory Manager (Genomics)	Elaine Kenny
IT Manager	Tom Tobin
Commercial Director	Dolores Barry
Group Health and Safety Manager	Susan Wall
Clinical Advice	Consultants on duty/Medical/Clinical Scientist on duty
Client Services Team	Client Service Team Member
Service Feedback	Commercial and QA Managers
GDPR Requests	Data Protection Officer

7.0 CLINICAL ADVISORY SERVICES

Enfer Medical provides a consultant led clinical advisory service to our users. Our Medical Consultants are responsible for the provision of clinical advice. Our Clinical and Medical Scientists with the appropriate training can provide technical advice on the interpretation of laboratory results.

- GPs may contact members of our Clinical Team between the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday by email at gpclinicalqueries@healthmail.ie OR by contacting our Client Services Team who will direct the query without delay to the relevant member of the Clinical Team (see below) or their Deputy.

Enfer Medical Clinical Advisory Team/Consultants

Position	Name
Consultant Chemical Pathologist	Prof. Carel Le Roux
Deputy Consultant Chemical Pathologist	Dr. Royce Vincent
Consultant Haematologist	Dr. Saad Ahmed
Deputy Consultant Haematologist	Dr. Ahmed Bannaga
Consultant Microbiologist	Dr. Rosemary Curran
Deputy Consultant Microbiologist	Dr. Billie Caceda
Deputy Consultant Microbiologist	Dr. Ciaran O'Gorman
Clinical Advice	Relevant Consultant or Medical/Clinical Scientist on duty
Client Services Team	Client Service Team Member

- Enfer Medical takes pride in offering a comprehensive and traceable clinical advisory service to Healthcare Professionals, ensuring optimal support when needed for patient result interpretation and management pathways.
- At Enfer Medical, the Client Service Team plays a central role in this process, triaging queries in real-time to the appropriate personnel. This enables us to address enquiries such as urgent clinical queries as efficiently as possible, aligning with our dedication to exceptional client and clinical service. We understand the importance of timely and accurate information, and our commitment to real-time query management reflects our ongoing efforts to exceed client expectations.

8.0 CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT

We respectfully request that GPs be cognisant of the national referral criteria for the GP direct access to the Chronic Disease Management program. Please ensure that you only refer tests fulfilling the criteria below to the laboratory, to ensure that this service can be continued.

- One NTproBNP test will be facilitated for the first GP Structured Chronic Disease Management registration visit for each patient who has a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes, ischemic heart disease or atrial fibrillation. This is in line with the GP Agreement 2019. An allowance may also be made for individuals who have a pre-existing clinical diagnosis of one of the above chronic diseases and who are already registered on the Structured Chronic Disease Management Programme, but who still require an NTproBNP test to establish a baseline for their condition.
- Outside of these criteria, an NTproBNP may be ordered in the following circumstances, where the GP feels it's clinically indicated:
  1. For investigation of a patient who has one of the above diagnoses and presents with deterioration in symptoms; consistent with heart failure; and
  2. As part of the investigative work up of a patient who presents with symptoms consistent with heart failure.

9.0 VITAMIN D TESTING AND GUIDELINES

Please note that Vitamin D testing should be restricted to specific patient groups as outlined in the HSE Laboratory Services Reform Programme Advice Note (2024) - Indications for the measurement of Vitamin D levels.

National Guidelines Advice for Laboratories and Users

1. Vitamin D testing should be reserved for specific patient groups; it should not be used as a general screen.
2. In general indications for testing for vitamin D should be one of the following:

   a) metabolic bone disease
   - Osteoporosis or Osteopaenia
   - Rickets or Osteomalacia
   - Paget's Disease of Bone
   - Pathological Fracture
   - Unexplained Hypocalcaemia, raised PTH, low or high Phosphate

   b) Specific named clinical condition due to or leading to Vitamin D Deficiency
   - Malabsorption, CKD, Liver Disease
   - Muscle weakness
   - Chronic inflammation
   - Certain Drug therapies: Glucocorticoids, Anticonvulsants, Antiretrovirals, Antifungals, Anti Oestrogens or Cholestyramine
3. Routine repeat resting is not required. For those with low baseline and malabsorption retesting in 6 months may be helpful.
4. The Department of Health have issued advice for the general population regarding vitamin D supplementation. Vitamin D testing should be restricted to specific patient groups as outlined in the HSE Laboratory Services Reform Programme Advice Note (2024) - *Indications for the measurement of Vitamin D levels*.

10.0 USER FEEDBACK

Enfer Medical highly values client feedback as an integral component of our quality management systems. We actively encourage users to share their experiences, suggestions, or concerns through our dedicated feedback channels. This valuable input not only contributes to the enhancement of our services but is also a testament to our dedication to providing the best possible laboratory experience. Clients can access real-time feedback on our website or submit their comments directly.

We prioritise the integration of client feedback into our quality management system meetings, where it forms a crucial part of our discussion points. By engaging with and implementing feedback, Enfer Medical ensures that our laboratory services align with the needs and expectations of our clients, fostering a collaborative and responsive approach to quality assurance.

Beyond improvement efforts, this feedback process is a critical component of our complaints handling process. By actively engaging with and addressing client feedback, we ensure a robust and responsive approach to resolving concerns and maintaining the highest standards of service quality.

Where a GP needs to raise a complaint, they should contact one of the below:

- Client Services Manager: Mags Treacy (clientqueries@enfermedical.ie)
- Quality Manager: Margaret Buggy (quality@enfermedical.ie)
- Operations Director: Paul Simmons (paulsimmons@enfermedical.ie)

- Client Services section on www.enfermedical.ie

Or alternatively by raising a ticket here using the following link HERE or by using the link on our website. The information will be treated as confidential and investigated thoroughly. This process will link into the Quality Management System procedure for incident investigation.

Complaints will be acknowledged on receipt. Resolution of complaints will be undertaken within the shortest timeframe achievable. If resolution cannot be achieved within one month, the complainant will be notified.

The findings and corrective actions are documented in an investigation report, and the findings are then shared with the client, from our Enfer Medical Quality Assurance Manager, within one month of the Non-conformance (NC) being raised. This transparent and proactive communication ensures clients are informed and reassured about the steps taken to address the issue.

In the event of an adverse event within the laboratory e.g. IQC fail, EQA fail, result amendment or retraction resulting in harm or potential harm to the patient, the client will be notified as soon as possible once extent has been established.

11.0 EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Enfer Medical participates in External Quality Assessment and Proficiency testing schemes. All schemes are fully accredited. A detailed list of assays and relevant schemes are available on request. Any issues with EQA performance that could affect any of the services provided are communicated directly to service users where relevant.

12.0 DATA PROTECTION

Policy on protection of personal information:

Enfer Medical is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information of its service users and patients. In the course of their work our staff are required to collect and use certain types of information about people, including 'personal data' as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018. The service user has a responsibility to ensure that this personal data is:

- Obtained fairly.
- Recorded correctly, kept accurate and up to date.
- Used and shared both appropriately and legally.
- Stored securely.
- Not disclosed to unauthorised third parties.
- Disposed of appropriately when no longer required.

All staff working at Enfer Medical are required under the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure the security and confidentiality of all personal data they process on behalf of service users and patients.

13.0 REFERRAL POLICY

For the purposes of additional or confirmatory investigations, specimens may be referred to an accredited external laboratory, where possible. Enfer Medical approves referral Laboratories for use, and these are evaluated, selected, and monitored by the clinical and quality teams at Enfer Medical

and will be listed on the Approved Referral Laboratory List. The referral laboratory is clearly identified on the final report.

14.0 CHANGE HISTORY

Revision	Amendment details	Revision Date
2	Section 3.4 - updated criteria for urgent samples Section 3.5 - updated criteria for stability and urgent samples Section 11 - findings shared within one month Section 8 Dr Ciaran O'Gorman added Appendices 1 – 3 updates to test list details and SRAs	18/04/2025
3	Full review of document to create a GP specific User manual. Tests removed from the back appendices and new documents created outside of the manual. Approved test List and Sample Collection Guidance for Approved Services. Available through links to resources page and dedicated client webpages.	19/06/2026