



## ***Bordetella pertussis* Testing Change**

### **Culture Discontinuation**

Please note that from **19<sup>th</sup> March 2018**, the laboratory will no longer be accepting swabs for *Bordetella pertussis* culture.

### **Molecular Replacement**

If the clinical picture is consistent with whooping cough/pertussis, please request ***Bordetella pertussis* PCR**. This is more sensitive than culture and has a much faster turnaround time.

The optimal sample is a naso-pharyngeal swab sent to the laboratory either dry, in viral transport medium, or in universal transport media (UTM). Swabs received in other types of transport medium, including charcoal, cannot be tested by PCR and will not be accepted, ([see Swab Chart](#)).

For patients who have symptoms of longer than 3 weeks duration, neither culture nor PCR is recommended due to decreased sensitivity.

*Bordetella pertussis* serology may be considered for patients with a long duration of symptoms (4 weeks or more). However, the specificity of this test is sub-optimal so the patient must have a high pre-test probability of pertussis to maximise the positive predictive value of the test.

**Please could this update be distributed to all GPs and Practice Nurses at your Health Centre.**

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