

Ref no: 052150517
From: Public
Date: 15/05/17
Subject: Blood Cultures

REQUEST & RESPONSE

1. Who is the policy or clinical lead for blood culture best practice at your trust? Please provide a name, job title, postal address, email address and phone number.

Dr Kalani Mortimer, Consultant Microbiologist, St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR;
kalani.mortimer@sthk.nhs.uk; 0151 430 1831.

2. Does your Trust follow the Public Health England SMI guidelines for blood cultures?

Yes

3. How many blood culture sets are taken for each suspected case of (a) sepsis and (b) other bacterial infection, and where there is more than one blood culture set taken are these taken from different sites - please provide an answer for both (a) and (b).

The recommendation in the Trust blood culture policy for adults is as below:

Ideally, take 1-2 sets of blood cultures from different sites if possible BEFORE starting antimicrobials. If bacterial endocarditis or endovascular infection is suspected, take three sets of blood cultures at separate time intervals to demonstrate persistent bacteraemia as a result of an endovascular focus of infection: 1 hour intervals are a minimum; ideally take samples at 6 hours apart unless the patient is acutely unwell or haemodynamically unstable in which case, in order to avoid delaying antibiotics, take the blood cultures at 15 minute intervals then start antibiotics.

4. How many individual blood cultures were taken at your trust in the following years: (a) 2012/13 (b) 2013/14 (c) 2014/15 (d) 2015/16 (e) 2016/17?

Year	Number of blood cultures taken
2012-2013	9540
2013-2014	10350
2014-2015	11319
2015-2016	14227
2016-2017	14669

5. How many individual blood cultures were identified as being contaminated in the following years: (a) 2012/13 (b) 2013/14 (c) 2014/15 (d) 2015/16 (e) 2016/17?

Year	Number of contaminated blood cultures
2012-2013	473
2013-2014	384
2014-2015	420
2015-2016	534
2016-2017	706