

Sexually Transmitted Bacteria Reference Laboratory

Health Protection Agency, 61 Colindale Avenue, London NW9 5HT

Referral of specimens for Chlamydia trachomatis culture confirmation: from patients with persistent infection

- STBRL offers a primary diagnostic service for the detection of viable *C. trachomatis* infection. This service is aimed at patients with persistent Chlamydia infection who have not responded to therapy.
- The Chlamydia culture service is free of charge for specimens which have been sourced from patients who have failed treatment with a first line recommended therapeutic regime (Azithromycin or Doxycycline) and have been confirmed as *Chlamydia trachomatis* positive at the local laboratory.
- STBRL will accept genital swabs (cervical and/or urethral) from patients fitting the above criteria. Swabs must be compatible with Chlamydia culture techniques. STBRL currently uses Copan swabs with a flocced bud which are available FOC upon request.
- In rarer instances STBRL will also accept specimens from invasive Chlamydia infection (not respiratory) and other non-genital sexual sites e.g. lymph-nodes, rectal specimens and ulcers.
- In order to preserve the viability of clinical specimens, STBRL request that following collection specimens are transported to STBRL the same day or are stored at 2-8°C and are transported to STBRL the following day. If this is not possible and a longer storage time is necessary specimens **MUST** be stored in the presence of a culture compatible cryoprotectant at **-80°C** (available FOC from STBRL).
- Upon receipt specimens will be both cultured for Chlamydia and tested using a Chlamydia specific NAAT.
- Specimens referred to STBRL for testing **MUST** have completed Chlamydia Culture Service Referral **and** Enhanced Surveillance forms enclosed with them. Both forms are available on the STBRL website.
- If you wish to use this diagnostic service please contact STBRL in advance to facilitate specimen transportation.

STBRL will aim to report results within 10 working days.

- Specimens referred for culture with insufficient referral information will not be processed and the referring laboratory will be charged.

**The laboratory can be contacted by telephone (020 8327 6464)
or email stbri@hpa.org.uk**