

Consultation Document

QUANTIFERON GOLD TESTING REQUESTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Quantiferon Gold (QFN) is a blood test used to assist with the diagnosis of latent TB infection (LTBI). It has no role in the diagnosis of active TB infection. The most common indications for QFN testing in our community are as follows:

1.1. Follow-up of contacts of an active TB case

1.1.1. This work is done almost exclusively by the Auckland Regional Public Health Service and so GPs and other primary care practitioners should not be ordering QFN for this indication

1.2. Pre-employment screening for people whose employment (e.g. healthcare workers) may bring them into contact with active TB cases

1.2.1. This testing is not publicly funded and either the individual or the employer needs to cover the cost of this test at the time it is performed

1.3. For patients about to undergo immunosuppressive therapy for chronic conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, and those patients about to undergo chemotherapy for malignancies

1.3.1. In these settings the testing should be ordered by the medical specialist caring for the patient

2. CURRENT SERVICE

At the current time primary care practitioners including GPs are able to request QFN without any restrictions.

3. RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

Except for the settings outlined above, QFN is not indicated in primary care. In addition, it is not a perfect test and the results can be both confusing and alarming.

4. PROPOSED NEW SERVICE

We propose to offer this test on the basis of specialist request only. For all other requests including GP and other primary care practitioners the patient will be invited to pay or the test will not be performed

5. CONSULTATION PROCESS

Key stakeholders will be consulted about this proposed change in service. Stakeholders include the following:

- Auckland Regional Public Health Service
- DHB respiratory and infectious diseases physicians
- DHB clinical microbiologists
- Primary care including PHOs
- GPs

5.1. What are we consulting on?

We are consulting on restricting QFN testing in primary care.

5.2. Who is being consulted?

The stakeholders outlined above.

5.3. Consultation Timeline

Consultation document	Friday 18 th March 2016
Feedback	Until 5pm Friday 8 th April 2016
Decision and announcement	Friday 15 th April 2016

6. HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK

Please give feedback to:

Dr Arlo Upton

Clinical Microbiologist and Medical Director, Labtests and Northland Pathology

Laboratory

Arlo.upton@labtests.co.nz

7. DECISION

The decision will be made available on the Labtests and LabPLUS websites, and those giving feedback will also be informed of the decision by email.