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Dear laboratory users,

### **Changes to microbiology culture of high vaginal swabs – September 2024**

From Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September, the Microbiology department will be updating the current laboratory testing for genital tract and associated specimens. Culture and sensitivity testing for high vaginal swabs (HVS) will now be in line with the guidance set in the UK Standards for Microbiology Investigations.

The current process for a HVS cultures for common genital tract pathogens, including *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*.

The updated process will no longer culture for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* on a HVS, as this is not the optimal sample type for this analysis. Therefore if this investigation is required, an endocervical Amies charcoal bacterial swab for culture &/or nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) using the Alinity m multi-collect specimen collection kit, should be sent to the microbiology laboratory.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the laboratory for assistance. The microbiology handbook will be updated with this information in due course.

Sincerely,  
Dr Vicki Fleming  
Consultant Clinical Scientist (Microbiology) & Clinical Laboratory Lead