

24 July 2017

Dear Doctor

Re: Critical Result Notification Policy

SydPath actively promotes and implements best practice in order to ensure that the highest level of patient safety is practised. A review of existing critical result notification categories, limits, and procedures has been undertaken and tabled for your reference.

The notification categories are

1. **Critical Risk Results:** indicate a **potentially life threatening condition** and are notified immediately by direct contact at any time of day.
2. **Significant Risk Results:** indicate a **non- life threatening condition** and are notified as soon as possible within 24 hours.
3. **Urgent Request Results:** are **prioritized for testing and notification** as instructed by the requesting doctor.

Critical Risk Results

Haematology

Hb	< 70	or	>200	g/L
Platelets	< 20	or	>1000	x10 ⁹ /L
Neutrophils	< 0.5	or	>50	x10 ⁹ /L
Malaria	all positive results			
INR				> 8.0

Biochemistry

Bicarbonate	<12			mmol/L
Calcium	<1.5	or	>3.5	mmol/L
Glucose	<2.0	or	>40	mmol/L
Lactate			>10	mmol/L
Magnesium	<0.2			mmol/L
Potassium	<2.0	or	>6.5	mmol/L
Sodium	<115	or	>160	mmol/L
Troponin			>14	ng/L

Microbiology

Positive blood or CSF cultures

Significant Risk Results

Haematology

Hb	*70 – 85			g/L
Platelets	*20 – 50			x10 ⁹ /L
Neutrophils	*0.5 - 1.0			x10 ⁹ /L
INR			≥ 4.0 or ≤ 8.0*	
Fibrinogen	< 1.0			g/L

Significant Risk Results

Biochemistry

ALT			>1000	U/L
Amylase			>500	U/L
Bicarbonate	*12 – 15	or	>40	mmol/L
Calcium			3.0 – 3.5*	mmol/L
CK			>5000	U/L
Cortisol	<80	or	>1500	nmol/L
Creatinine			>200	umol/L
FT4	<6	or	>40	pmol/L
Glucose	*2.0 – 2.5	or	20 – 40*	mmol/L
Ionised calcium	<0.8	or	>1.5	mmol/L
Lactate			4.0 – 10.0*	mmol/L
Lipase			>300	U/L
Magnesium	*0.2 – 0.4	or	>2.0	mmol/L
Phosphate	<0.4	or	>3.0	mmol/L
Potassium	*2.0 – 2.5	or	6.0 – 6.5*	mmol/L
Sodium	*115 – 125	or	155 – 160*	mmol/L
TSH	<0.02	or	>50	mIU/L

Therapeutic Drugs

Carbamazepine			>15	mg/L
Digoxin			>2.0	ug/L
Lithium			>1.5	mmol/L
Paracetamol			>30	mg/L
Phenytoin			>25	mg/L
Salicylate			>400	mg/L
Valproate			>120	mg/L

Microbiology

Positive results for:

Respiratory viral PCR, pertussis, TB, Measles or STI.

Acute hepatitis serology, stool PCR and culture

Other infections urgently reportable to Public Health as per NSW policy

(* results outside these limits are considered critical test results)

In order to best ensure we are able to contact you with these results we request the following:

- That we have contact numbers for within and outside the practice hours
- That when the requesting doctor is unavailable, another practitioner will receive the results
- That for significant test results telephoned and faxed to the surgery, that they will be passed to the requesting doctor (or an alternative doctor)

Our practice from SydPath will include

- In order to avoid unnecessary calls, generally only the first of a type of abnormality will be telephoned.
- We will support telephoned results with a faxed result when requested
- For privacy and security e-mail and SMS are not currently acceptable tools for sending private patient information
- If there are clinical queries resulting from any critical or significant result, please request to speak to a pathologist (8382-9100)