



QUALITY UPDATE

A monthly publication providing information and updates to CompuNet Clients.

Mission: Improve the Health of Our Community through Excellence in Medical Laboratory Services

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State of the Laboratory

By: Ed Doucette, CEO

*E*ach year CompuNet's Management Team meets to review and update our annual and long-term plans. Our "Roadmap" is one result of these meetings and describes CompuNet's key initiatives and goals for the coming year. We are confident that successfully achieving these goals will continue to improve the services we provide to you and your patients. Highlights of our 2009 Roadmap are described in greater detail below.

In 2009 CompuNet will, once again, raise the bar for "Best in Class" service and quality through the application of Lean/Six Sigma continuous improvement techniques. Also, as an additional resource for your practice, CompuNet is developing and, later this year, will publish test selection protocols reflecting the current best practice in laboratory medicine.

CompuNet has, by far, the most extensive test menu in the region, and we will continue to expand our menu in 2009 in order to reduce turn around times and improve specimen integrity. Look for details on our new offerings in future issues of the Quality Update.

Additionally, our Lean/Six Sigma improvement and best practices extend to our Patient Service Center Network. To better serve your patients, we are relocating some staff to busier patient service centers and even relocating centers for better patient access. Our Patient Service Center network offers convenient hours and nearly 30 locations; one or more are sure to be close to you or your patients. As new locations open, we will keep you and your patients informed.

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State of the Laboratory *cont.*

Our efforts to eliminate rework, improve accuracy and to reduce paperwork have really been paying off. Today, over 70% of all tests ordered and results transmitted are done so electronically. We will continue to work with your practice to help you derive the full benefits of our many electronic connectivity options. If you haven't already done so, please contact your service representative to discuss the best option for your practice.

We are looking forward to another exciting year and, as always, we value your comments and ideas on how we can serve you better.

Bordetella pertussis and Bordetella parapertussis

By: Nicole Kahmann - Manager of Molecular Diagnostics/Virology

*P*ertussis, commonly called whooping cough, is a highly infectious disease of the respiratory system caused by *Bordetella pertussis*. Little attention has been focused on the closely related species, *Bordetella parapertussis* which is also responsible for a whooping cough-like disease in children. The disease caused by *B parapertussis* is usually milder than that caused by *B pertussis*. However, no difference has been shown in frequency of symptoms, such as whooping and vomiting, between patients with *B pertussis* and *B parapertussis* infections.

Neither pertussis vaccination nor childhood pertussis provides lifelong immunity to symptomatic reinfection – as evidenced by the frequency of pertussis in adults. Studies conducted in Finland, Germany and the U.S. have shown that approximately one-third of laboratory-confirmed Bordetella infections are caused by *B parapertussis*.

Clinical disease due to *B parapertussis* infection is most common during the first 5 years of life and the majority of symptomatic infections have been noted in children.

A rapid real-time multiplex PCR assay for detecting and differentiating *B pertussis* and *B parapertussis* in nasopharyngeal swabs has been developed and will be available from CompuNet Clinical Laboratories within the first quarter of 2009. This assay targets the insertion sequences *IS481* (for *B pertussis*) and *IS1001* (for *B parapertussis*).

Primers and probes are specific for the gene target. In order to distinguish between *B pertussis* and *B parapertussis* the system utilizes the specific melting temperatures of the probes to detect the specific PCR products. An internal control is incorporated into the assay to detect PCR inhibition.

The multi-plex *B pertussis/parapertussis* assay will be ordered using the same order number that is currently in use for the *B pertussis* test – **74258**. We should be able to offer this in mid-March 2009 but we will communicate the exact date by March 1, 2009.

The report will state:

Bordetella pertussis DNA:

_____detected _____not detected

Bordetella parapertussis DNA:

_____detected _____not detected

IMPORTANT NOTE regarding Health Department:

- *B. pertussis* **is** a reportable disease and **should** be reported to the Health Department,
- *B parapertussis* is **not** a reportable disease and **should not** be reported to the Health Department.

Specimens and Lock Box Reminders

By: Ron Mosbarger – Manager of Materials/Facilities/Transportation

Everyone in the healthcare field understands how busy we are on any given day. We have developed a couple of items for you to use as helpful reminders to put your specimens in the CompuNet lock box at the end of the day. You can order your CompuNet magnets and door hangers through your CompuNet Supply Order. Write your request for these items at the bottom of your order. Please feel free to call me directly (937-297-8207) if you have questions about any transportation or supply issues at CompuNet. CompuNet appreciates our partnership with you.



Magnet Reminder

Place this in a spot to remind your office to place specimens in the lock box.



Door Hangers

Place this on a door that you'll see to remind yourself to leave specimens in the lock box.

Faxing Results from your Office

By: Joanne Denlinger – VP of Information Resources and Mark Shearer – Manager of Chemistry

There are several features within Care360 which help flag abnormal results and bring them to your attention. In addition to the abnormal results being in bold they are also placed in a separate column. One other option allows for the row containing the abnormal result to be highlighted with a gray background. The gray background can be very useful on the original copy but can cause problems for the recipient if you fax the results to another provider.

It is not that uncommon for a physician to fax the report to another provider after the report has been reviewed. Some fax machines do not have the resolution to be able to distinguish the abnormal result from the gray background. The end result is that the abnormal results are unreadable to the recipient.

We receive a number of calls every day asking for us to resend results because the faxed copy they have does not have readable abnormal results. This ends up delaying the service to your patients.

If you regularly fax results and you have the gray background on your abnormal results, we strongly suggest that you contact your Sales Representative to request that the highlighting be turned off. The bolding of abnormal results and the placement of abnormal results into separate columns will remain.

On the Web... www.compunetlab.com

Patient Service Center Client Surveys

By: Jennifer Gossett – Patient Service Center Team Leader

Beginning in March 2009, CompuNet will offer another method for our clients to tell us what's on their mind. Our website, www.compunetlab.com, will feature a brief survey under our "Healthcare Providers" tab. This is meant to be a quick way for our clients to provide us feedback about our performance. The survey will also include a free text field giving clients the option to send comments directly to Paul Labbe, CompuNet Clinical Laboratories' Vice-President of Operations. Since CompuNet has many different areas that service our clients, every couple of months a new department will be spotlighted. The survey will focus on the interests critical to that particular area. The first survey will include questions that are constructive to our Marketing department. We hope that all of our clients take a few minutes to provide us the necessary feedback regarding our services. Your opinions help us improve ways that we can better serve you. Check back to the website every couple of months to provide responses for the department highlighted during the month.

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