




Meritus Medical Laboratory, LLC

11110 Medical Campus Road, Suite 230
Hagerstown, MD 21742

Telephone 301.665.4LAB (4522)
Toll-free 800.428.2105
hagerstownmedlab.com

Director: John G. Newby, M.D., F.C.A.P. **Associate Directors:** Gary M Mire, M.D., F.C.A.P. Michael J. O'Donoghue, M.D., F.C.A.P.

Date: December 12, 2012
To: Medical Staff, Laboratory, and Key Personnel
From: John G. Newby, MD 
Director of Laboratories
Subject: Rapid Identification of Positive Blood Culture Organisms

Effective December 17, 2012 Meritus Medical Laboratory will discontinue PNA FISH (Peptide Nucleic Acid Fluorescence In Situ Hybridization) probe testing for identification of certain organisms directly from positive blood cultures. These include *Staphylococcus aureus*, Coagulase Negative Staphylococci, *Enterococcus faecalis* and other Enterococci.

PNA FISH is being replaced by a new microarray technology (NANOSPHERE). This is a qualitative test system for simultaneous detection and identification of potentially pathogenic gram- positive bacteria directly from positive blood cultures. The assay expands the detection of organisms with higher quality results than the PNA FISH methodology. NANOSPHERE uses a fully automated polymerase chain reaction multiplexed microarray technology. The system is able to detect and identify the following bacterial species:

<i>Staphylococcus spp.</i>	<i>Streptococcus spp.</i>	<i>Enterococcus faecalis</i>
<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	<i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i>	<i>Enterococcus faecium</i>
<i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i>	<i>Streptococcus pyogenes</i>	
<i>Staphylococcus lugdunensis</i>	<i>Streptococcus agalactiae</i>	
	<i>Streptococcus anginosus group</i>	

In addition, the assay is able to detect the *mecA* resistance marker, inferring *mecA*-mediated methicillin resistance and the *vanA* and *vanB* resistance markers, inferring *vanA/vanB* mediated vancomycin resistance.

Our goal is to provide identification within four hours of the initial positive blood culture. The complete culture and susceptibility testing will be completed and finalized within seventy-two hours.

We welcome your comments on this change and other laboratory issues. Please feel free to contact me at (301) 665-4900 or Chanhpheng Phengvath, Microbiology Technical Specialist at (301) 665- 4936 with any microbiology questions or comments.