



Please find the monthly update from the Oxford RCGP RSC Practice Liaison Team below.

RCGP RSC Monthly Newsletter: February 2022

1. Serology Sampling - Good Housekeeping
2. Webinar Series
3. Value of Serology - Booster Effectiveness
4. Saving Lives - Self Swabbing Reminder
5. EMPOWER Study
6. Active Projects

*Remember to join us tomorrow....
Focus on Research-Tuesday
FOR-T*

Serology Sampling and Vaccine Effectiveness

The RCGP Research and surveillance Centre (RSC) network is working tirelessly on ongoing surveillance work and projects, despite the challenges of the year.

This next webinar is aimed at showing practices how serology sampling contributes to insights for vaccine effectiveness, in all patient groups including high-risk patients.

We hope to leave attendees with no doubt about how important sampling is in the community and to encourage more sampling and more members of our network to take part in serosurveillance.

Join us and hear from Dr Heather Whitaker, UKHSA Senior statistician and Dr Ezra Linley from the UKHSA Vaccine Effectiveness Unit.

Join us [here](#)

We are running a series of 'bite sized' webinars over the next few months for 30 mins on a Tuesdays at 1pm. They can be accessed on the [RCGP](#) website [here](#).

Serology Sampling – Good Housekeeping

VACUTAINERS

Samples must be provided in the BD Vacutainers that we provide or your own Monovette bottles as long as they can hold 10ml of blood. Blood samples that are less than 10ml cannot be used effectively by our lab.

LABELLING

Blood bottles must be clearly labelled with the following information: NHS Number, Date of Birth, Sex and Date of Collection.

FORMS

The accompanying Serological Surveillance form must also be completed, in full, with the following information: Practice Name, Patient Name, NHS Number, Date of Birth, Sex and Date of Collection.

Samples and forms not containing the required data can result in unmatched samples and may impact our ability to pay you. If you are able to, print two sticky labels and add them to both the bottle and the form for consistency.

If you have any questions about sampling, please contact our Practice Liaison Team practiceenquiries@phc.ox.ac.uk

Value of serology in looking at the effectiveness of boosters

It has been a delight to see your serology samples being put to excellent use by UKHSA over the course of the pandemic. They have been especially useful for improving our understanding of how effective booster vaccinations have been for conferring immunity amongst different patient groups.

Serology samples are analysed for their S-antibody (anti-spike antibodies; an indication that an individual has most likely been vaccinated against a particular virus) and N-antibody (anti-nucleocapsid antibody; an indication of likely previous natural exposure to a particular virus) levels. Any drop-off of S-antibodies that is observed over time is a proxy for vaccine waning. The failure to generate S-antibodies post vaccination or booster is a proxy for vaccine failure amongst that particular patient group.

Thanks to your hard efforts collecting serology samples, we are starting to understand which patient groups may levy particularly strong or comparatively weak immune responses post-vaccination. This is essential for informing vaccine policy. As we look to 'live with COVID', it will be more important than ever to have ample serology samples to draw from to ensure that we are monitoring vaccine effectiveness across all patient demographics and pre-existing conditions. Please keep up the excellent work!



Reminder: We still need swabs

**Saving Lives /TakeATest:
Self Swabbing is now easier to issue**

From the 18th October, TakeATest changed the voucher code system. Practices taking part with patient self-swabbing can give out their **Practice ID code** instead of being given a list of vouchers from the company.

This means that you no longer need a list of codes for the team to cross through when they are issued to patients. Instead, you only need to give the patient the GP Practice ID (this is a letter followed by 5 numbers unique to each practice).

Please make sure that the patient has a mobile as patients need to enter the **correct mobile number** to get their results as soon as possible.

If you would like to use TakeATest in your practice, let us know and we will get you an account.
practiceenquiries@phc.ox.ac.uk

The EMPOWER Study

Sharon Dixon is a GP Partner in East Oxford and is also an NIHR Doctoral Research Fellow with an interest in researching women's health in primary care. Sharon would be grateful for <10 mins of your time. Continue reading....

The EMPOWER study (funded by the NIHR School for Primary Care Research) is bringing together ideas about un-met needs in women's health from women and the clinicians who care for them and their suggestions for ways in which having new or better technologies might help. This includes any equipment, devices, products, tests, or kit women themselves use at home as well as anything health professionals use to examine or treat women.

Please take part in the survey:

<https://oxford.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/empower-exploring-mapping-priorities-for-womens-health>

More information about the project can be found [here](#)

Click [here](#) to sign up to our active projects.