



Serology QAP News

Ready for the challenges of 2008 ?

Welcome to the new year!! If you were lucky enough to have an end of year break, we hope you are refreshed and ready to dive in to 2008!

In your travels, if you come in contact with something weird and wonderful please keep in mind our gift and credit vouchers - email us today!

All of your SQAP information folders and specimens for 2008 have been dispatched, the SQAP would like to thank our helpers Angus and Cherie for their help at our busiest time, they were very hardworking and diligent. We appreciate their efforts!! (photo right).

The development of the **HPV module** is still underway and 2008 sees the re-introduction of the **Avian Influenza** module. If you are interested in participating in these modules please contact us.

This issue features the latest 'Module of the Month', **Lymphadenopathy Serology**, a short '**Stability Study**' questionnaire, also '**Do you need QA?**' lists some tests which maybe of interest and much more valuable information.

Take the time to have a coffee and a read.... Your feedback is appreciated!!



Till next time... The Serology QAP Team

[Ros Escott - Program Manager,
Deane Byers - Senior Scientist,
Mark Hanlon - Technical Manager,
Trish Donnelly - Information Coordinator,
Adam Walters - Technical Officer,
Professor William Rawlinson - Program Chair]

Who's Who at SQAP ???

The Serology QAP are delighted to welcome two new members!

Mark Hanlon (front left), is our new **Technical Manager**.

Some might know Mark from his 29 years at the Children's Hospital, Westmead and his ongoing interest in *Bordetella pertussis*. Mark brings with him a wealth of knowledge in quality, having held the role of quality representative for numerous years.

Adam Walters (front right), is our new **Technical Officer**.

Adam joins the team having returned from working in the UK. Adam is keen to expand his knowledge of Serology having worked previously in blood banking.



We are very excited to be entering this new phase of our development and hope that you will warmly welcome Mark and Adam, see '**Upcoming Events**' to catch up with them...

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Don't forget, the closing date for the **RCPA Serology QAP Scholarships** is the **28th February** don't miss out!
You could win AUD 1000!



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sqap@rcpaqap.com.au

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www.rcpaqap.com.au/serology

Customer Satisfaction Survey 2007/08

The Serology QAP issues a 'Customer Satisfaction Survey' every two years to ensure that the program remains relevant to participants. The questionnaire is designed to assess quality objectives, enrolment, test material, data analysis methods, report (including turn-around-times) and opportunities for improvement.

Congratulations to Michele Kolo (see right) and thank you to the 133 people who completed the survey providing valuable feedback. A review of the comments provided is ongoing, however, we hope to issue the complete findings of the questionnaire shortly. Overall, the feedback has been favourable with some good suggestions. *Stay tuned!!*

Happy with the quality of SQAP specimens?

- most participants said YES

Satisfied with the website functions?

- most participants said YES



Rating the SQAP as a QA provider?

- most participants are happy

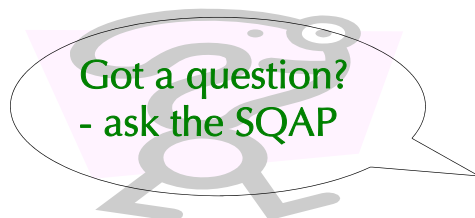


Stability Studies 2008

Transportation - Stability Studies are ongoing to ensure that specimens received by participants have maintained their integrity and are not the cause of erroneous results. A participant in the United Arab Emirates agreed to receive temperature loggers with their specimens. The return of these loggers will give an indication of the range of temperatures that specimens are exposed to during dispatch.

Freezer Storage - Stability of specimens during freezer storage in the laboratory is an important aspect of stability testing that we must consider. Ideally, specimens should be stored at -80°C , although -20°C is acceptable provided the freezer is not part of a refrigerator with a defrost cycle. During a defrost cycle, the freezer heats in order to melt ice and allow the water to drain. This creates an unstable temperature and so should never be used in a laboratory. If your SQAP specimens are stored in this type of environment, they may not remain stable until the last survey at the end of the year.

In order for us to further investigate stability of SQAP specimens under a range of storage conditions, please complete the form on the back page of this newsletter and fax to the SQAP on: +61 2 9779 5916.



Mandatory QA for Hepatitis C testing???

The SQAP has been asked, on a number of occasions, about QA testing for Hepatitis C.

► **The TGA has requested that we retract our previous response and clarify that it is still mandated for labs in Australia to use the NRL for HCV testing. It appears that this mandate will remain in place for some time.**

The answer can be found in the **National Hepatitis C Testing Policy, May 2007** [section 9.3 Quality Assurance of Hepatitis C testing pg36]. The Serology QAP quoted a section and believed that it was a true evaluation of the policy. We apologise for any inconvenience that this error may have caused to our Australian participants.

Meeting Details

RCPA Update, Meeting, Sydney

Meet the new SQAP team on the stand at the latest RCPA Update meeting in Sydney on **14 – 16 March, 2008**.

The Serology QAP Session is Sunday 16th March at 9.30 - 10.30am

► The Serology QAP (Ros, Deane and Mark) will present a brief overview of progress, changes and performance for Serology and Molecular Diagnostics.

► **Dr David Leslie** from VIDRL, Melbourne, will provide a very interesting presentation on **Syphilis**.

David currently reviews the Syphilis reports for the SQAP providing invaluable feedback to participants.

It should be a great session. We look forward to catching up with participants at the stand and the meeting.

Hope to catch up with you!



Viruses in May, Katoomba

Come and join us at the annual '**Viruses in May**' meeting on **8 - 10 May, 2008** at the historic Carrington Hotel, Katoomba in the picturesque Blue Mountains.

This meeting is Australia's only intensive clinical virology update, focused specifically on the clinical, diagnostic and management aspects of viral infection. The intended audience includes clinicians, scientists and trainees.

The Preliminary Program for 2008 includes;

Principles of Clinical Virology, Antiviral Therapy & Neurological Infections and Viral Pandemics - Animals, Insects & Humans.

For further information refer to the Viruses in May website:

<http://www.virusesinmay.com> or contact the event co-ordinator meg@theasm.com.au

Hurry, early bird Registration closes 29th February, 2008.

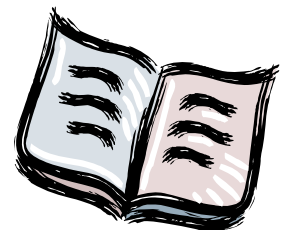
Discount rates are available to ASM members.

See you there!



Upcoming Events 2008

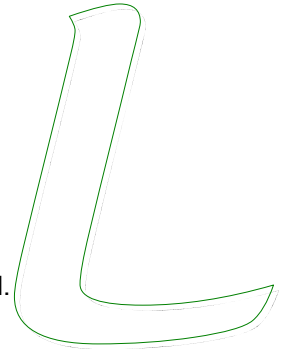
- **RCPA Pathology Update Meeting**, 14 – 16 March 2008, Sydney, Australia.
- **Clinical Serology and Molecular Special Interest Group Meeting**, March 2008, Symbion Health, North Ryde.
- **Viruses in May**, 8 – 10 May 2008, Katoomba, Sydney, Australia.
- **NRL Annual Conference**, 2 – 5 July 2008, Melbourne, Australia.
- **ASM (Australian Society for Microbiology) Annual Conference**, 6 – 10 July 2008, Melbourne, Australia.
- **AIMS (Australian Institute of Medical Scientists) Annual Conference**, 13 – 17 October 2008, Melbourne, Australia.





Module of the Month

Lymphadenopathy Serology - CMV, EBV & Toxoplasma



History

- ◆ 1979 relocation to Royal Melbourne Hospital, VIC and **Toxoplasma** was introduced.
- ◆ 1982 **CMV** was introduced.
- ◆ 1991 Panel testing for **EBV** and **CMV** introduced.
- ◆ 2001 **Basic Module** included CMV, EBV and Toxoplasma.
- ◆ 2005 **Lymphadenopathy** including CMV, EBV and Toxoplasma introduced as a module.
- ◆ 2007 Scoring of **Lymphadenopathy** module - lead to enhancement of interpretative comments.

Participants

	2005	2006	2007	2008
CMV	92	88	90	105
EBV	80	87	83	88
Toxoplasma	84	85	83	94
Total Enrolled Lymphadenopathy	104	107	107	115

Module

Specimens/ survey	3
Surveys/ year	4
Total Specimens/ year	12

Stats 2007

Results Not Returned (NR)	21
Late Results	4

Performance 2007

	CMV	EBV	Toxo
Inconsistent Results (outside consensus)	10	21	12
Expired Kits	6	7	5
Transcription Errors	3	2	5
Incomplete/ Inconsistent Data	11	5	15
Inappropriate Interpretative Comment	Mostly CMV comments		

Markers



- CMV IgG
- CMV IgM
- CMV total antibodies
- CMV IgG Avidity

http://www.newscentre.bham.ac.uk/press/2007/07/age_immunity_30__07_07.shtml (05 Feb 2008)



- Toxoplasma IgG
- Toxoplasma IgM
- Toxoplasma IgA
- Toxoplasma total antibodies
- Toxoplasma IgG Avidity



- EBV VCA IgG
- EBNA IgG
- EBV EA IgG
- EBV VCA IgM
- EBV EBNA IgM
- EBV EA & EBNA IgA
- EBV IgG Avidity
- Heterophile antibodies



RCPA SEROLOGY QAP SCHOLARSHIP 2008

\$1000 SCHOLARSHIP 2008

Two **\$1000 scholarships**
will be awarded to attend
a conference of
your choice!!

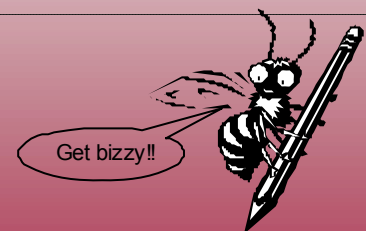
Write a 1000 word article about your
serological, molecular diagnosis or research

[One \$1000 prize for a routine diagnostics submission &
One \$1000 prize for a research based submission]

Applicants should have
less than 5 years laboratory experience

Application Forms at website
www.rcpaqap.com.au/serology

Additional information
Tel: +61 2 9779 5915
Email: sqap@rcpaqap.com.au



Closing Date: 28th February, 2008



Stability Study Questionnaire 2008 - SQAP Specimens in your Freezer

Please complete this form and fax to the Serology QAP on +61 2 9779 5916 by **29th February 2008**.

Participant Number _____

Question	Yes	No
1. Are the Serology QAP specimens frozen immediately upon receipt?		
2. Does your freezer have a defrost cycle?		
3. Do you use a freezer with a defrost cycle to store other specimens or kit reagents?		

Question	-80°C	-20°C	Other
4. What temperature is the freezer where you store your Serology QAP specimens?			
If other, please explain:			
5. Is the freezer temperature monitored?			
6. At what interval is the temperature recorded?			

Other comments

The SQAP is currently preparing specimens for stability testing. Several laboratories have kindly indicated their willingness to assist with this process. To participate, or to enquire about the stability testing, please contact Mark Hanlon, Technical Manager.



Participant Number _____

Test	Yes
Strongyloides	
Gutherie Test for CMV	
Diphtheria	
Tetanus	
Rickettsia PCR	
Influenza PCR	

Other _____

Thank you for completing this form, please fax to the SQAP +61 2 9779 5916