Laboratory Service Update
13 July 2020

Discontinuation of Helicobacter Pylori Serology

*Canterbury SCL would like to inform referrers that Helicobacter pylori serology will no longer be routinely available from Friday 31 July 2020.*

*H. pylori* serology is a test that measures IgG antibodies specific to *H. pylori* in serum as evidence of infection at some time. This test is unable to determine if antibodies are present as a result of active or past infection, and so specificity of this test for current infection is poor.

*H. pylori* serology has been largely replaced by stool antigen testing. Stool antigen testing has superior test performance (sensitivity and specificity), and clinical utility. In addition, *H. pylori* faecal antigen testing can also be used to confirm eradication following treatment, where a patient has on-going symptoms. The New Zealand Microbiology Network ([https://www.nzmn.org.nz/](https://www.nzmn.org.nz/)) recommend stool antigen tests as the preferred testing modality for diagnosis of *H. pylori* infection.

For more information regarding when patients should undergo testing for *H. pylori* infection, please refer to this BPAC article: [https://bpac.org.nz/BT/2014/May/h-pylori.aspx](https://bpac.org.nz/BT/2014/May/h-pylori.aspx)

Any requests for *H. pylori* serology after the 31 July 2020 will only be performed after discussion with a Canterbury SCL Clinical Microbiologist.

For any queries, please contact:

Dr Arlo Upton  
Clinical Microbiologist  
Canterbury SCL  
[arlo.upton@sclabs.co.nz](mailto:arlo.upton@sclabs.co.nz)