
Important Laboratory Update

Replacement of Faxing



19 April 2021

In June 2019 the Ministry of Health and Accident Compensation Commission released a joint communique defining secure communication within the New Zealand health sector, specifically in regards to email and faxing. The two recommendations are:

1. All emails be transmitted using Transport Layer Security (TLS) no later than January 2020.
2. All analogue faxing to be migrated to a fully digital security-assessed communications solution such as email no later than December 2020. This date was later extended.

Labtests has complied with the first recommendation and has notified the Ministry of Health as requested.

The technology required to transmit faxes is now end-of-life, which means that Spark can no longer guarantee the service in the event of a hardware or software malfunction. Accordingly we have been advised by Chorus that the technology required to send faxes from our Carbine Road laboratory will be discontinued on May 31st. Effectively this means that no laboratory results can be faxed by Labtests from that date.

The capability to **send or receive faxes for all Labtests departments **will cease** on **Monday May 31, 2021****

It is the referrer's responsibility to create a workflow to ensure laboratory results are checked in a timely manner. Faxing of results is not a routine method for the laboratory to send result reports. Using TESTSAFE and PMS is the advised and safest way for a referrer to receive patient results. It is recognised that faxing is used by a small number of referrers who do not have access to TESTSAFE or HL7 messaging into a PMS; for these referrers Labtests is able to arrange results to be emailed rather than faxed. Labtests takes no responsibility for emailed results that are not checked by referrers

What do referrers need to do next?

- If a referrer has access to TESTSAFE, RCP/Results Repository or a Patient Management System (PMS) and you do not normally receive results via fax, no action is required.
- If you have already provided an email address, we will be in touch when we make the switch to perform a test send.
- If you currently receive results via fax, you will need to setup an email address.
- If you need to provide an email address, please send this along with your practice information to: lta.practitioners@labtests.co.nz

Referrers Unable to Access TESTSAFE or Electronic Reports

Paper copies would be the default until the referrers have access to electronic result messaging via TESTSAFE or HL7 messaging into a PMS.