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# Biolab Medical Unit

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May 2007

## News Bulletin from Dr Stephen Davies, Biolab Medical Director

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### Introduction

Biolab this year celebrates its 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September. This comes at a time of great change for us and the purpose of this news bulletin is to inform you of some immediate changes that may affect you, and to outline our plans for the future.

### Dr John McLaren Howard retiring

As many of you will now be aware, Dr John McLaren Howard, our Laboratory Director of 23 years and co-founder of Biolab with Dr Stephen Davies, will be retiring on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2007. We are of course very sorry to see him leaving, but wish him a long and happy retirement. John will continue to be involved in the support of some of our methods and will be performing, in his own laboratory, some of the tests he has developed in recent years (see further details below).

### Nicholas Miller PhD, MCB, FRCPath, Biolab Laboratory Director

We are delighted to announce that Dr Nicholas Miller, who has been with us for over 10 years is taking over from John as Laboratory Director and will be taking overall responsibility for the provision of tests, interpretation of our results and development of new methods. Nick has had a longstanding and extensive interest in nutritional medicine, and has considerable experience of running and managing pathology laboratories. Please see the Biolab web site for Nick's list of published papers.

### Laboratory

We have a longstanding team of clinical biochemists working alongside Nick and John, and we are currently training new laboratory staff and we shall be recruiting further technical staff in the near future. Our current laboratory team consists of Philip Worrell BSc, MPhil (Biochemistry) who has been with Biolab for 10 years, Roger Burr BSc (Environmental Science), and BSc (Biochemistry), and has just submitted

his MSc thesis on measurement of antioxidant status, and Andrew Williams BSc (Pharmacology & Toxicology), MSc (diploma in Nutrition), and two laboratory assistants, Peter Saffu (BSc Biomedical Sciences) and Jacqui Morsico-Tarr.

### Melita Dean SRN

Melita, our most senior nurse, joined the Biolab team in January 1985 and heads a team of three nurses who have been with us for several years.

### Mark Howard, Biolab Manager

Mark has been with Biolab since its inception in September 1984 as laboratory technician and computer whizz. In 1997 I appointed him as Biolab Manager and he provides cohesiveness of Biolab services.

### Temporary suspension of tests

Following John's retirement there will be a period of three weeks when we will be unable to accept samples for the tests he will be performing from his own laboratory. Therefore samples for the following tests cannot be accepted from Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May until Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June:

- **ATP profile and translocator proteins**
- **Cell free DNA**
- **SODase (full studies)**

We will be able to accept samples for **DNA Adducts**, but the samples will not be analysed until the week beginning Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

### Tests to be discontinued

For a number of reasons (infrequent requests, research techniques that cannot easily be transferred to routine laboratory work or availability at other laboratories), we have

reluctantly taken the decision to discontinue some tests which will coincide with John's retirement. For those of you who request any of these tests please accept our assurance that we have only taken these decisions after long and careful consideration and we regret any inconvenience this may cause you or your patients:

### Tests to be discontinued from Wednesday 16th May 2007:

Anti-gliadin and endomyseal antibodies – we will now refer these to The Doctor's Laboratory.
Bile acids
Fluoride motility – lymphocyte sensitivity to fluoride available as a " <i>Chemical Sensitivity</i> " test.
Hydroxyproline (was part of our osteoporosis screen)
ICD-Mn – serum, sweat and hair manganese levels available
Intracellular fluid electrolytes
Ionised calcium
Ketone bodies in plasma
Metallothionein
Myothermograms – alternative tests are sweat, WBC or RBC magnesium, or magnesium retention tests (please enquire for further details).
Organic acids in serum – available in urine via Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children
Pesticides & Related Substances – to be replaced in the next few months with a qualitative pesticide profile (details to follow).
Sperm and post coital tests – The Doctor's Laboratory offer a wide range of semen analysis screens.
Neutrophil vitamin C – alternative is a fasting serum vitamin C.

### B Vitamin Profile

Our niacin (vitamin B3) test has become ever more popular and changes in our methodology over recent years has meant that this can now be included in our B Vitamin Profile, and full Vitamin Profile, for no additional charge from Monday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2007.

### New Request Form

A new request form will be available later this month reflecting all these changes. Please let us know if you would like to be supplied with these as soon as they are available? You will still be able to use the current request form till you receive the new one.

### Laboratory Guide and Web Site

Our laboratory guide is currently being updated to reflect the changes outlined here, and our web site will also be amended by mid-May. The new Laboratory Guide will be sent to our regular users as soon as it is available, but if you make infrequent use of Biolab and would like a copy please let us know. It will also be available for download from our web site at ([www.biolab.co.uk/datashet.html](http://www.biolab.co.uk/datashet.html)).

### Biolab CD-ROM

The Biolab CD-ROM includes all Biolab request forms, our Laboratory Guide, information sheets, publications and copies of presentations from Biolab workshops. These are available free of charge to health professionals.

### Feedback and comments

We always welcome your comments on the service we provide, and feedback from your patients, or suggestions of tests you would find useful. So please don't hesitate to pick up the phone or drop us a line with any comments you would like to make.

We thank you for your continued use of and interest in Biolab, and we look forward to continue helping you help your patients in the future.

And I am also sure that many of you who know John would like to join me and the Biolab staff in wishing him a happy, healthy and long retirement.

Dr Stephen Davies MA, BM, BCh, FACN  
Biolab Medical Director  
8<sup>th</sup> May 2007