

Performance Monitoring System for Leukaemia Diagnostic Interpretation Programme

Outline

This programme is designed to assess a laboratory's ability to diagnose leukaemia using a full spectrum of laboratory tests. No samples are issued, the programme is totally web-based.

Trial Frequency

Each trial (send out) is standardly issued every other month (minimum 4 times and maximum 6 times per annum).

Scoring System Classification

The scoring system is based upon the Correct Diagnosis established by an expert opinion from the UK NEQAS LI Steering Committee. A performance classification is produced on the basis of comparing a participant's diagnosis returned to the correct diagnosis.

Scoring System Operation

Performance classifications are assigned by comparing a participant's submitted diagnosis to the Correct Diagnosis which has been established by expert opinion from all of the data provided including clinical presentation, morphology, immunophenotype, cytogenetic and molecular genetic data. On rare occasions, this may not be the consensus diagnosis; the consensus diagnosis is the diagnosis selected by the majority of participants.

A performance classification is produced based on whether the diagnosis is classified as correct, differential, or incorrect.

A Differential Diagnosis classification is assigned where a participant's submitted diagnosis differs from the established correct diagnosis but represents a defensible interpretation of the data provided in the trial dataset. Specifically, the submitted diagnosis must be one that could reasonably be reached using only the information available in the trial, without recourse to additional pathological investigations, and must be agreed by a majority Steering Committee.

An Incorrect Diagnosis is one that does not utilise all of the available information to establish either the correct or differential diagnosis. It could also be a diagnosis that may lead clinicians to give sub-optimal therapy. This classification would also be used where a submitted diagnosis has either assumed or introduced pathologies other than those provided in the trial data set.

A correct or differential diagnosis is classified as Satisfactory whereas an incorrect diagnosis or a non-return of result is classed as Critical. A Critical classification is an Unsatisfactory Performance (UP); a Persistent Unsatisfactory Performance (PUP) is where a participant has at least two Critical classifications within a six trial window with the latest result being a Critical classification.

Unsatisfactory and Persistent Unsatisfactory performances are communicated to participants on their trial report. The Leukaemia Diagnostic Interpretation Programme is currently classed as educational and therefore no action is taken regarding Persistent Unsatisfactory Performance.

As with all scoring systems, it is important to note that these will be constantly reviewed to determine whether they are providing the information required. The director and deputy director of the scheme retain the discretion to determine if an individual trial should not be monitored.

The table below shows the performance scores assigned for the various diagnosis classification.

Definition of diagnosis	Classification assigned
Correct	Satisfactory
Differential	Satisfactory
Incorrect or non-return of results	Critical