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To: Maternity Clinical Leads and hospital managers
Local Maternity System representatives
Midwives
Lab managers
Finance leads

15 April 2020

Dear colleague

Placental Growth Factor (PIGF)-based testing: helping to keep women out of hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic

On behalf of the NHS Accelerated Access Collaborative national working group on PIGF-based testing, we are writing to remind you of the additional benefits of PIGF-based testing (used to help in the diagnosis of pre-eclampsia) as a means of helping to keep women out of hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PIGF-based testing has a high negative predictive value (rule-out) for pre-eclampsia, meaning women who receive a negative diagnosis can be safely sent home. This is a way of safely and efficiently reducing unnecessary contact and possible spread of the coronavirus within secondary care and during hospital admission.

PIGF-based testing has been recommended for use by NICE Diagnostic Guidance (DG23) and Clinical Guidance (NG133) and is supported by the NHS Accelerated Access Collaborative and Innovation and Technology Payment (ITP) programme. PIGF-based tests have been evaluated in randomised controlled trials^{1 2} which have demonstrated a faster diagnosis of pre-eclampsia and a reduction in out-patient hospital attendances. The very high negative predictive value for ruling out preeclampsia permits extended community care with reduced monitoring or intervention.

¹ Predictive Value of the sFlt-1/PIGF Ratio in Women with Suspected Pre-eclampsia (PROGNOSIS Trial). Zeisler et al 2016 N Eng J Med 7;374 13-22

² The PARROT Study. Placental growth factor to Assess and diagnose hypeRtensive pRegnant wOmen: a stepped wedge randomised controlled trial. Duhig et al. Published Online April 1, 2019 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)33212-4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)33212-4)



We emphasise that this test is to be used in women with suspected pre-eclampsia. If a diagnosis of pre-eclampsia is made, women should be managed as such, independently of test results.

Two PIGF-based tests are currently recommended to assist in the diagnosis of pre-eclampsia under NICE DG23:

- **Roche Diagnostics - Elecsys Sflt-1:PIGF ratio test**
- **Quidel Corporation – Triage PIGF Test**

Updated guidance, issued by RCOG for healthcare professionals on COVID-19 infection in pregnancy, recommends that steps are taken to reduce the contact time of vulnerable pregnant women within secondary care – [Guidance for maternal medicine services in the evolving coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#).

Yours sincerely



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Accelerated Access Collaborative National Working Group on PIGF-based testing, comprises:

- Accelerated Access Collaborative
- NHS England and NHS Improvement
- NICE
- Academic Health Science Network
- Roche Diagnostics
- Quidel Corporation
- PIGF Clinical Champions Dr Manu Vatish and Dr Jenny Myers