



## Discontinuation of Mantoux Testing

Over the past few years, interferon gamma release assays (IGRAs), such as Quantiferon Gold have largely replaced Mantoux testing. Their main indication is for the laboratory diagnosis of latent tuberculosis infection.

IGRAs are now preferred to Mantoux testing. The (blood) test is easier to perform and interpret, has better negative predictive value, and is not affected by BCG vaccination.

The increasing usage of Interferon Gamma Release Assays (IGRAs) such as Quantiferon Gold has resulted in a consequent decline in the number of Mantoux tests being performed. Due to the decrease in test numbers, many staff members now perform less than the recommended numbers of Mantoux tests that are required to retain optimal competency and this has become an ongoing issue for laboratory accreditation purposes.

Pathlab has already discontinued Mantoux testing in the Eastern Bay of Plenty and Waikato regions for these reasons. **From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018**, Pathlab will discontinue Mantoux testing throughout all the regions we serve – Lakes, Waikato and Bay of Plenty.

Listed below are the main indications for Quantiferon Gold testing:

- **Pre-employment screening for latent TB infection;** this is the most widely used and well established indication for the Quantiferon Gold test, (patient paid, not DHB funded, pre-approval not required).
- **When travelling to a country where endemic rates of TB are high,** particularly if working in a healthcare setting. Consultation with a travel doctor is recommended, (patient paid, not DHB funded, pre-approval not required).
- **When there is a clinical suspicion of extra-respiratory TB,** (endorsement/pre-approval is necessary from an appropriate specialist).
- **When there is a strong clinical suspicion of respiratory TB but sputum culture is negative,** (endorsement/pre-approval is necessary from an appropriate specialist).
- **Contact tracing,** (endorsement/pre-approval is necessary from public health).

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CLINICAL UPDATE

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