



EQA scheme for dialysis water

The food and environmental proficiency testing unit based at PHE (Colindale) provides external quality assessment (EQA) to laboratories that analyse food and water samples. Confirming that the water used to prepare dialysis fluid is safe to use is paramount for patient safety.

Dialysis water scheme

This EQA scheme supports laboratories to provide evidence that the testing conducted is of a high standard, providing assurance to the staff in the laboratory and to the commissioners of the test.

The *European Renal Best Practice Guidelines* recommend that the quality of water produced by the water treatment facility should meet the concentration limits for microbiological contaminants detailed in BS ISO 13959:2009: *Water for Haemodialysis and Related Therapies*. This states that dialysis water shall contain a total viable microbial count (TVC) of less than 100 colony forming units (cfu)/mL. The guidelines further recommend that if routine monitoring of the water used to prepare dialysis fluid demonstrates microbiological contaminant level in excess of 50 cfu/mL, then a programme of corrective measures should be commenced immediately.



Lenticule discs provide a means of preserving bacteria. They consist of control-dried cultures of viable micro-organisms that require storage at -20°C.

Scheme features:

- the samples are provided in the PHE's unique lenticule disc format
- three distributions of two samples per year
- each sample requires a TVC as recommended by the guideline (17-23°C for seven days per mL)
- proven stable, homogeneous samples prepared and tested by qualified microbiologists
- interpretation of test results is presented in reports
- on-line reporting available
- informative, educational and timely reports
- easy-to-follow statistic and scoring systems
- total confidentiality of performance
- individual continuous performance assessment reports provided
- accreditation awarded by the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS)
- for further information about the dialysis water scheme please contact us by email on foodeqa@phe.gov.uk or by telephone +44 208 327 7119