

Top 10 Tips

Point Of Care Testing

- 1 Involve your local hospital laboratory**
Your local hospital pathology laboratory can play a supportive role in providing advice on a range of issues including the purchase of devices, training, interpretation of results, troubleshooting, quality control, and health and safety.
- 2 Management**
Many people will be involved in the creation, implementation and management of a POCT service. It is vital that an appropriate POCT co-ordinator is identified and a POCT committee established.
- 3 Health and safety**
Be aware of the potential hazards associated with the handling and disposal of body fluids, sharps and waste reagents outside of a laboratory setting.
- 4 Training**
Training **must** be provided for staff who use POCT devices. Only staff whose training and competence has been established and recorded should be permitted to carry out POCT.
- 5 Always read the instructions**
...and be particularly aware of situations when the device should **not** be used.
- 6 Standard operating procedures (SOPs)**
SOPs must include the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- 7 Assuring quality**
The analysis of quality control (QC) material can provide assurance that the system is working correctly.
- 8 Results**
Results should be reviewed by appropriately qualified staff with particular reference to the patient's history.
- 9 Record keeping**
...is essential and must include patient results, test strip lot number and operator identity.
- 10 Maintenance**
In order that devices continue to perform accurately they must be maintained according to the manufacturer's guidance.