



Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo
Road
London
SE1 8UG

Fax: 020 7972 4790

X March 2006

Dear Colleague

**DETECTING CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE IN ENGLAND -
INTRODUCING eGFR REPORTING IN LABS WITH EFFECT FROM 1
APRIL 2006**

As you know, the National Service Framework for Renal Services (Part 2) recommended that the NHS in England should adopt a classification of chronic kidney disease (CKD) based on that introduced by the Kidney Disease Outcome Quality Initiative (K/DOQI) in the United States. It also recommended that a formula-based estimation of glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) should be used to measure impaired kidney function rather than the long established method of serum creatinine measurement or the collection of 24-hour urine. A uniform classification for kidney disease will help estimate prevalence, identify people at an earlier stage, and provide treatment opportunities to slow down the progression of the disease and its complications.

One of the difficulties in introducing the new measurements is the lack of standardisation of serum creatinine methods. A concern is that any bias in reporting eGFR could lead to over or under referral of patients.

To deliver the NSF recommendation, the Department of Health set up an expert advisory group to ensure a consistent approach and to look at the possibility of reducing the inter-laboratory variability of eGFR reporting so that an agreed formula could be applied nationally to ensure equivalent referral rates and management across the country and transferability of patient data.

The group has recommended that eGFR should be calculated by using the 4-variable Modification of Diet in Renal Disease (MDRD) equation for adults. They also advise that eGFR should not be routinely estimated for

children. Implementation will be from 1 April 2006. To support the introduction of eGFR standard reporting we have:

- put together an information package consisting of fact sheets for laboratories and GPs, explaining how to calculate and interpret eGFR, together with a note on FAQs
- commissioned the UK National External Quality Assessment Scheme (NEQAS) to set up a scheme to facilitate eGFR reporting.

I attach a copy of the information pack for your attention. We would be grateful if you could cascade this to colleagues who would find it helpful. This information is also available on the Renal and Pathology DH websites from the main portal <http://www.dh.gov.uk/Home/fs/en> and further hard copies are available from the Department's order line 08701 555 455 or by fax from 01623 757369.

Yours sincerely

Ian Barnes
Pathology National Clinical Lead

Donal O'Donoghue
Co-Chair, Renal Advisory Group

David Colin-Thomé
Co-Chair, Renal Advisory Group