

# Microbiology Services Laboratory – User Survey Report 2023



**Blood and Transplant**

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## **1. Introduction:**

Microbiology Services Laboratory (MSL) is committed to a process of on-going evaluation and improvement to ensure that the services provided by the Laboratory meet the needs and requirements of users. In order to monitor user experience and satisfaction levels MSL undertakes a User Satisfaction Survey each year. It aids in highlighting departmental strengths and weaknesses and provides an opportunity for service users to discuss areas for service improvement and any other comments.

## **2. Methodology:**

The survey was launched on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August 2023, using Microsoft 365 Forms, with the closing date of the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2023. The link for the survey was emailed to a dedicated group of email address, as well all key individuals. Key individuals were requested to pass on the survey to ~~the~~ an appropriate person if they were not the most suitable person to respond. Unlike previous years, just one survey was sent out, but with the opening question capturing whether the User was commenting on services provided by MSL – Bacteriology, MSL – Virology or both.

The survey was comprised of 12 mandatory questions, with the main focus of the survey to seek User opinions with regards to the Laboratory User Guide, turnaround times (TAT), assistance with advice and queries, reporting mechanisms and overall satisfaction. After each mandatory question, there was an optional question where Users could include any comments, suggestions or recommendations they had with regards to development and improvement. Unlike previous User surveys, this year we included a question on the Colindale refurbishment project and Users awareness of this work.

In order to receive more meaningful responses and feedback to our survey, we included responses that captured either a satisfaction level on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being most dissatisfied and 5 being most satisfied), or specific choice answers (e.g. yes/no or always/most of the time/rarely/never).

A copy of the survey is included in the Appendix.

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## 3. Survey Results:

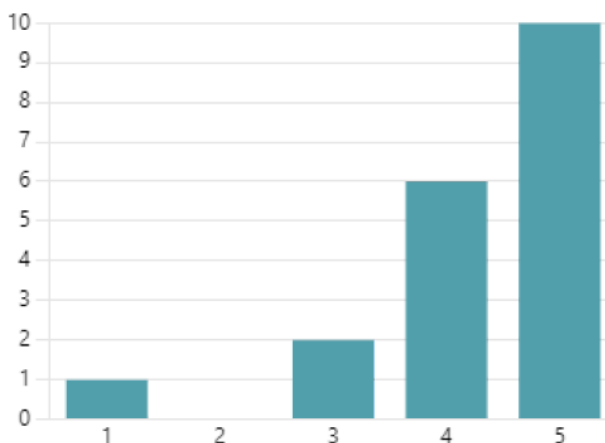
Q: Please select which section of the Microbiology Services Laboratory (MSL) you use?



The survey was sent to 57 User email addresses: 35 use MSL-Virology services only, 12 use MSL-Bacteriology services only and 10 use both MSL-Virology and MSL-Bacteriology services. Overall, we received responses from 19 Users including, 30% (n=3/10) of Users that use both labs, 37% (n=13/35) of MSL-Virology Users and 25% (n=3/12) of MSL-Bacteriology Users.

Q: The Laboratory User guide provides clear and concise information for requesting MSL services?

4.26  
Average Rating



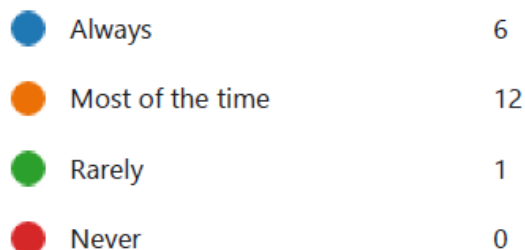
Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
1	0	0	1	33.3	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	2	15.4	0	0	0	0
4	5	38.5	0	0	1	33.3
5	6	46.2	2	66.6	2	66.6
Responses (total)	13	100.1	3	99.9	3	99.9

\*All percentages are rounded to one decimal place, therefore, total % will add up to just below or just over 100% in most cases.

In total, 18/19 responders score 3 or higher for this question (100% Virology responders, 100% Both responders, 66% Bacteriology responders). One responder scored 1 for this question, however, they also added a comment saying 'I don't know about the guide', suggesting they were not best placed to answer this question. Perhaps in the future we should include an option for 'not applicable to responder' in our User Survey to capture these types of responses more appropriately. No other comments about the User guides were raised.

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Q: The turnaround time meets the needs of our service?

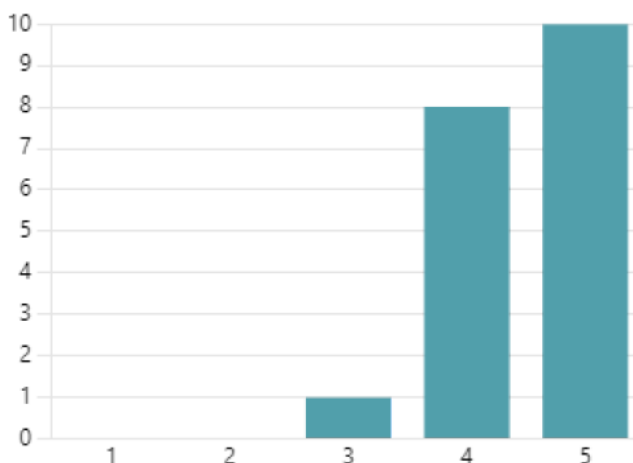


Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
Never	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rarely	0	0	0	0	1	33.3
Most of the time	9	69.2	1	33.3	2	66.6
Always	4	30.8	2	66.6	0	0
Responses (total)	13	100	3	99.9	3	99.9

In total, 18/19 responders scored this question as 'most of the time' or 'always', with just one User of both labs giving a score of 'rarely'. This User provided their contact details and gave a comment which specified a desire for the CMV confirmation to be less than one week and stating that the Malaria TAT is extremely long. Another User of both labs commented on the receipt of samples on bank holidays and two Virology Users commented on HTLV NAT testing and reports being sent to the wrong department. All Survey comments and MSL responses are detailed in section 4.

Q: How satisfied are you with the usefulness of technical and clinical advice provided?

**4.47**  
Average Rating



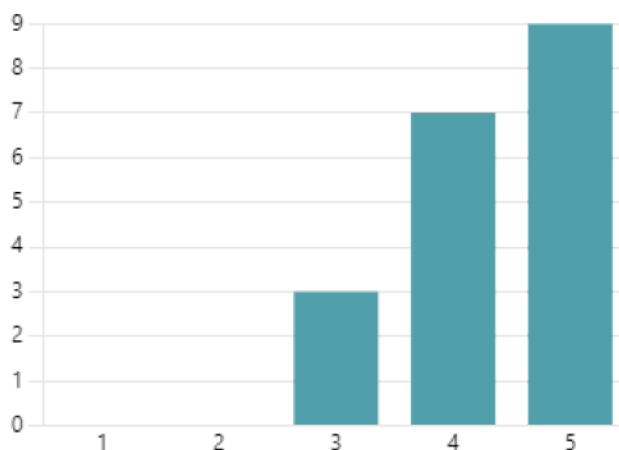
Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	1	7.7	0	0	0	0
4	5	38.5	1	33.3	2	66.6
5	7	53.8	2	66.6	1	33.3
Responses (total)	13	100	3	99.9	3	99.9

All 100% of responders gave this question a satisfaction level of 3 or more. One Virology User provided positive feedback in the comments, as well as a suggestion. As they included their contact details, MSL has feedback directly to this User. No other comments were received. All Survey comments and MSL responses are detailed in section 4.

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Q: How satisfied are you that your email/telephone enquiries are dealt with efficiently and effectively by the laboratory?

4.32  
Average Rating

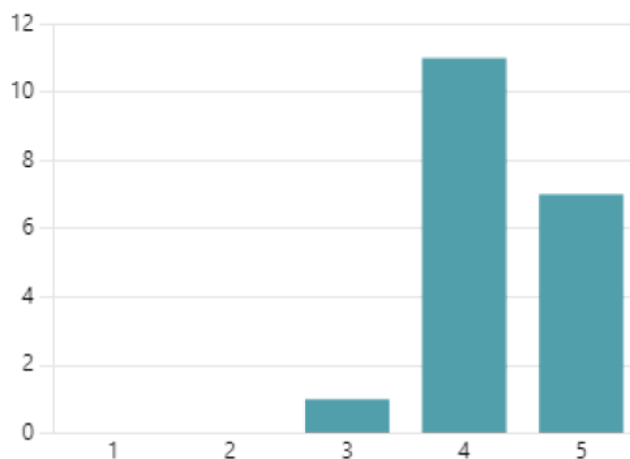


Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	2	15.4	0	0	1	33.3
4	3	23.1	2	66.6	2	66.6
5	8	61.5	1	33.3	0	0
Responses (total)	13	100	3	99.9	3	99.9

All 100% of responders gave this question a satisfaction level of 3 or more. One Virology User provided positive feedback in the comments, otherwise no other comments were received. All Survey comments and MSL responses are detailed in section 4.

Q: How satisfied are you with the ease of use of the referral/request forms?

4.32  
Average Rating



Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	1	7.7	0	0	0	0
4	7	53.8	2	66.6	2	66.6
5	5	38.5	1	33.3	1	33.3
Responses (total)	13	100	3	99.9	3	99.9

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All 100% of responders gave this question a satisfaction level of 3 or more. Two Virology Users included comments about batching of multiple samples on one request form and that individual request forms per sample creates a lot of paperwork; one of which rated this question a 3. Both have provided contact details and have received feedback from MSL. No other comments were received. All Survey comments and MSL responses are detailed in section 4.

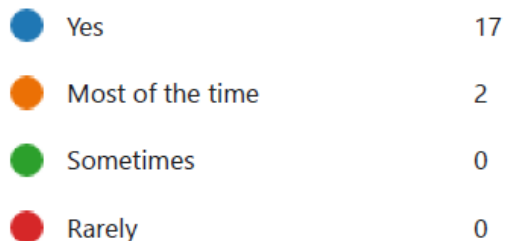
Q: Does the portfolio of tests provided meet the needs of your Service?



Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
No	0	0	0	0	0	0
Partially	1	7.7	0	0	0	0
Yes	12	92.3	3	100	3	100
Responses (total)	13	100	3	100	3	100

In total, 18/19 responders agreed that our tests meet the Users needs (100% Bacteriology, 100% responders using Both labs). One Virology User responded that the tests partially met their needs, but unfortunately did not provide their contact details for us to follow up with them and understand more. No User comments were provided regarding our portfolio of tests.

Q: Are the results in the laboratory report presented in a clear manner?



Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
Rarely	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sometimes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Most of the time	1	7.7	0	0	1	33.3
Yes	12	92.3	3	100	2	66.6
Responses (total)	13	100	3	100	3	99.9

All 100% responders replied to this question with yes (89%) or most of the time (11%). There was no option to comment on this question, as an additional question was included regarding utility and clarity of report comments. See next question.

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Q: Regarding the utility and clarity of the report comments, do you find them: generally clear and helpful, not always clear could be improved, rarely clear needs improvement.

- Generally clear and helpful 18
- Not always clear, could be impr... 1
- Rarely clear, needs improvement 0

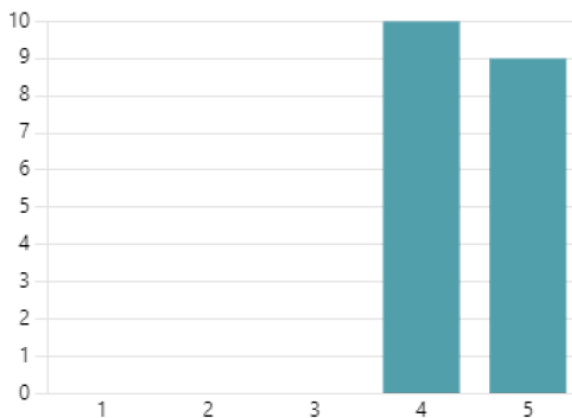


Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
Rarely clear	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not always clear	0	0	0	0	1	33.3
Generally clear	13	100	3	100	2	66.6
Responses (total)	13	100	3	100	3	99.9

In total, 18/19 responders felt the reports were generally clear and helpful (100% Virology only Users, 100% Bacteriology only Users). One responder that uses both labs felt reports were not always clear and could be improved. This user also left a comment suggesting the Hepatitis status of a donor could be clearer. Unfortunately, they did not leave their contact details in order for us to discuss further. No other comments were received. All Survey comments and MSL responses are detailed in section 4.

Q: How satisfied are you with mechanisms for reporting results?

4.47  
Average Rating



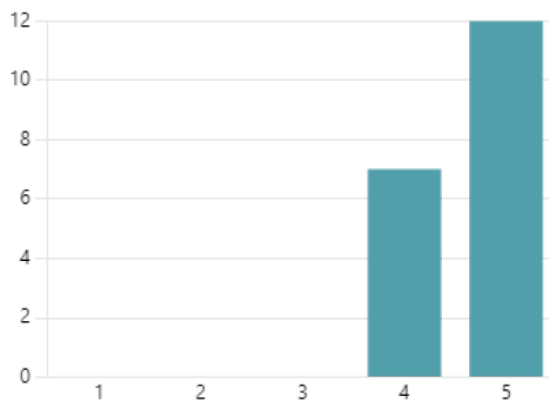
Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	5	38.5	2	66.6	3	100
5	8	61.5	1	33.3	0	0
Responses (total)	13	100	3	99.9	3	100

All 100% of responders scored this question 4 or higher, suggesting responders are quite happy with the way we report our results. However, based on previous User surveys we are aware that our Users would prefer both labs use a LIMS system for optimal test ordering and reporting of results. One Virology responder included a comment that sometimes reports go to the incorrect email address. No other comments were received. All Survey comments and MSL responses are detailed in section 4.

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Q: Overall, how satisfied are you with the Laboratory's services?

4.63  
Average Rating



Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	4	30.8	1	33.3	2	66.6
5	9	69.2	2	66.6	1	33.3
Responses (total)	13	100	3	99.9	3	99.9

All 100% of responders scored this question 4 or higher, suggesting responders are quite happy with the services provided by MSL. No comments were submitted for this question.

Q: In 2024, due to the refurbishment project for Colindale Centre, MSL will be temporarily located off site and may not be able to provide our full portfolio of tests, including R&D. Were you aware of the Colindale Centre refurbishment.

- Yes 4
- No 15



Satisfaction rating	MSL-Virology		MSL-Bacteriology		Both	
	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders	Number responses	% All responders
No	13	100	1	33.3	1	33.3
Yes	0	0	2	66.6	2	66.6
Responses (total)	13	100	3	99.9	3	99.9

In total, 15/19 (78%) responders were not aware of the upcoming refurbishment of Colindale Centre and the impact on MSL. This is why we included the question in this year's survey, as we expected this to be the case, despite the HVAC refurbishment project undergoing planning for the last 2 years. Just 2 Bacteriology responders and 2 responders that use both labs were aware of this change. This question also received the most comments, with queries covering impact on product validations, turnaround time, service provided, transport of samples and project dates. All Survey comments and MSL responses are detailed in section 4.

Q: Do you have any suggestions/recommendations on what improvements you would like in MSL's services?

This was an optional question and just one responder included a comment, indicating they were happy with the services provided by MSL. All Survey comments and MSL responses are detailed in section 4.

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## 4. User Survey Comments and MSL responses

All comments received as part of this survey are summarised in table 1. Where responders included their contact details, we have emailed them directly to provide customer-specific feedback and also requested additional details in order to inform our services, where relevant. Otherwise, this report will be circulated to all our Users so they can see the survey findings and MSL responses to comments.

A separate communication to our Users regarding the Colindale Centre refurbishments has been circulated by email.

**Table 1. Summary of User comments/suggestions**

Comment received (feedback status in parenthesis)	MSL response
I don't know about the guide (negative)	MSL-Bacteriology (SPN201) and MSL-Virology (INF1060) User guides are available on the Controlled document library on the intranet and the Hospitals website. With each new version, User guides are distributed to all MSL Users via the Q-Pulse distribution list. In addition, our User guides are directly shared with Users external to NHSBT.  If your department is currently not on the distribution list for the User guides on Q-Pulse, then please let us know so we can resolve this.
Bank holiday sample receipt cover should not rely on a department MSL do not trust (negative).	All samples for all departments transported to Colindale Centre, whether by internal transport or a courier, are received by Hospital Services (HS). According to the storage conditions stated on the outer transport packaging, samples are stored in the cold room or at ambient temperature until collected by MSL staff (Saturdays) or delivered by Porters direct to our department (next working day). Issues with this process happen infrequently and are managed under QIs. We're looking at options to improve tracking.  Currently QA and RCI Colindale are trialling a sample tracking system, with the hope it will optimise sample receipt by HS and sample transfer to RCI. MSL has requested that QA share the findings of this trial to determine if this would improve sample tracking for MSL also.
HTLV I NAT testing takes a bit longer to get results (negative).	Our TAT for Reference (Molecular) testing, which HTLV comes under, is 10 days for 90% samples and 20 days for 99% of samples. This is to allow for the volume of samples we receive, but also the batch testing we perform for each Virology marker.  User-specific feedback was also provided directly.
I appreciate you've responded to this comment before, but it really would be good to have a CMV confirmation TAT of under 1 week. The TAT for malaria does seem extremely long, but appreciate this is probably down to the new need to carry out a NAT in many cases (negative).	Our TAT for reference testing, which includes CMV confirmation, is 20 days for 99% of samples. This is to allow for the volume of samples we receive, but also the batch testing we perform for each Virology marker.  We are still in the process of transferring our CMV testing to the new analyser, which we hope will reduce the current TAT.  User-specific feedback was also provided directly.
We sometimes get the other departments results in error and they get ours which do affect the TAT's. We are a very busy departments so often the results get checked not as often as they should due to staffing levels (negative).	MSL apologises for these errors in incorrect use of departmental email addresses and ask that you let us know if this happens again so we can take appropriate action.  We recently circulated communication to all MSLV staff reminding them to use the correct email address for reports.
The advice given by the team has been helpful when we've had queries on what tests are available/possible on the sample type (positive). My only comment would be for further information to be shared on why a test might or might not be as valuable as a serology result.	Thank you for your feedback, it is good to know that our advice is helpful.  Please contact us with any sample-specific queries in the future so they can be rectified and inform our future testing.  User-specific feedback was also provided directly.
The team have always responded to email queries very quickly (positive).	Thank you for this feedback, it is always good to understand where we do well and where we can improve.
For the most part the form is easy to use (positive), it would be great if there was the option to provide a single form for a batch of samples that	ISO 15189 requires that each sample is unequivocally linked to a patient/donor. Therefore, MSL follows the standard practice of Clinical



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<p>would all have the same tests requested with a secondary list providing the sample and donor ID's within that batch.</p>	<p>Pathology laboratories in requesting that each sample has its own request form.</p> <p>We have discussed this request in detail, considering all risks and benefits. At this time, we think it is not possible to have batches of samples recorded on one form, as the risk to MSL processes outweighs the benefits to all.</p>
<p>One form per test per sample can generate quite a lot of paperwork (negative).</p>	<p>ISO 15189 requires that each sample is unequivocally linked to a patient/donor. Therefore, MSL follows the standard practice of Clinical Pathology laboratories in requesting that each sample has its own request form.</p> <p>We have discussed the option of sample batches on one form in detail, considering all risks and benefits. At this time, we think it is not possible to have batches of samples recorded on one form, as the risk to MSL processes outweighs the benefits to all.</p> <p>We appreciate this can mean it takes time to generate test requests for each sample. We welcome suggested amendments to our request forms to streamline this process for our Users.</p>
<p>Hep status needs to be clear cut. +ve or -ve, a ref range is not helpful (negative).</p>	<p>MSL has developed testing algorithms, resulting procedures and associated report comments working closely with Clinicians and clinical guidance. All are reviewed and audited regularly. If you would like to discuss something specific related to this, please contact one of the MSL management team whose details can be found in INF1060 User Guide.</p>
<p>Occasionally there has been a mix up with the email address used when sending some reports, but that could be a small hazard of having two very similar department names within the account (negative).</p>	<p>MSL apologises for these errors in incorrect use of departmental email addresses and ask that you let us know if this happens again so we can take appropriate action.</p> <p>We recently circulated communication to all MSLV staff reminding them to use the correct email address for reports.</p>
<p>It would be helpful to know what tests may not be possible during the period of refurbishment and if there are any changes to the reporting TAT's. It would also be helpful to understand if there will be any changes needed to how the samples are provided at the point of request.</p>	<p>A separate communication has been circulated to all MSL Users regarding the Colindale Centre refurbishment. This included proposed dates and impact on sample receipt, tests provided, turnaround times and impact on product validations.</p>
<p>If we have new assays that need to be validating this may delay our work. It depends on the timescale for the refurbishment (negative).</p>	
<p>We will require full information on portfolio of testing available during the relocation period.</p>	
<p>We would like to be informed of any impact on turnaround times for test results so we can keep our transplant centres informed.</p>	
<p>I'm aware of the change, but I've not seen any info on its potential impact on MSL - be good to understand.</p>	
<p>Could you please provide us with dates for the planned refurb - when it will start and when it is due to complete. Which services would this affect? Will there be an affect on the TAT for virology services? We will need updated contact details including addresses as we send you samples for testing. Can you please ensure addresses are provided in advance so we can make necessary arrangements for our courier company.</p>	
<p>Currently the suite of tests available meet our needs (positive).</p>	<p>Thank you for this feedback. If your needs change, please contact us so we can discuss further.</p>

### 5. Analysis:

The survey link was emailed to 22 MSL - Bacteriology and 45 MSL - Virology users. The response rate for MSL – Bacteriology users was 25%, for MSL - Virology users was 37% and for users of both labs was 30%. Overall, the 2023 response rate was similar to that of 2022 for MSL-Bacteriology Users, but the response rate this year was lower for our MSL-Virology users.

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The User Survey and results have been shared with the department in the monthly laboratory meetings for November and December 2023.

Overall the response to our survey was positive, with favourable responses (satisfaction  $\geq 3$  or no negative response to choice answers) to 8 of 10 questions regarding our complete service. Of the two questions with less favourable responses, one was regarding the User guide and the responder not knowing where to find it and the other question was regarding awareness of the HVAC project at Colindale. This has since been fed back verbally to the HVAC Project Team in October 2023.

The feedback we received from our users in the comments section were a mixture of positive (n = 3), negative (n = 9) and questions/comments (n = 5), but the majority was negative. This is to be expected, as we are asking for our users to highlight areas of improvement.

Turnaround times was raised again as an issue. This is something MSL are continually working on through process improvements, introduction of new equipment and improved staffing levels.

In the future we hope to have a new LIMS which will have a significant positive impact on our processes and, potentially, could assist with the introduction of electronic test requests, which would remove the requirement for completing FRMs for each sample (this was raised as another blocker by our users) and allow one reporting system for all MSL reports, preventing reports from being sent to the wrong user in error.

One user raised concern about how samples are received into Colindale Centre over long weekends. Unfortunately, they did not provide their contact details for us to discuss this further. All of Colindale Centre, including MSL, are aware of the complexities impacting sample receipt into Hospital Services. We are hoping that the findings from the recent trial in RCI will inform improvements we can make to optimise this side of our service.

We had positive feedback from our users regarding how we respond to queries and the value of our responses. However, two users raised points regarding information on specific tests performed and how the overall result is reported for hepatitis. MSL uses a range of tests (serology and molecular) to screen and confirm results for the mandatory and discretionary markers according to specific algorithms. These tests have been selected based on clinical guidance, regulations and their high sensitivity and specificity. Regarding reporting of these results, reports include an overall result (positive, inconclusive or negative) plus the result for each individual test. If users would like to discuss our reports further, then please contact the MSL management team for discussion.

Six user responses were regarding the Colindale Centre HVAC (Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning) project. It was clear from this part of the survey that many of our users were not aware of this project and how it will be impacting all of Colindale Centre, including MSL. Therefore, MSL prepared a communication which was emailed to our users in October 2023, explaining the expected impact on MSL services. Further communication regarding the HVAC project will be sent by the HVAC project team as details are confirmed.

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## Survey result overview:

- 100% of respondents gave a satisfaction score of 3 or greater for: the usefulness of the clinical and technical advice provided by MSL; email/telephone enquiries being dealt with efficiently and effectively; and ease of use of the referral forms
- 100% of respondents are happy with the mechanism for reporting MSL results and are happy with the service provided by MSL
- 95% of respondents gave a satisfaction score of 3 or greater for: the MSL User guides being clear and concise.
- 95% of respondents agreed that: turnaround times met the needs of the service always or most of the time; MSL's portfolio of tests met the user's service needs; and report comments are generally clear and helpful.
- 89% of respondents agreed that MSL reports are presented in a clear manner

## Appendix: Copy of MSL User Satisfaction Survey 2023:

- 1) Please select which section of the Microbiology Services Laboratory (MSL) you use?
- 2) The laboratory user guide provides clear and concise information for requesting MSL services?
- 3) Enter here comments on the user guide (optional)
- 4) The turnaround times meets the needs of our service?
- 5) Enter here any comments on turnaround times, including suggested changes to TAT or improvements (optional).
- 6) How satisfied are you with the usefulness of technical and clinical advice provided?
- 7) Enter here any comments on advice provided (optional)
- 8) How satisfied are you that your email/telephone enquiries are dealt with efficiently and effectively by the laboratory?
- 9) Enter here any comments regarding email/telephone enquiries (optional)
- 10) How satisfied are you with the ease of use of the referral/request forms?
- 11) Enter here any comments on referral forms (optional).
- 12) Does the portfolio of tests provided meet the needs of your service?
- 13) Enter here any comments on the tests provided by the laboratory (optional).
- 14) Are the results in the laboratory report presented in a clear manner?
- 15) Regarding the utility and clarity of the report comments, do you find them: generally clear and helpful, not always clear could be improved or rarely clear needs improvement?
- 16) Enter here any comments on interpretive comments on reports (optional).
- 17) How satisfied are you with the mechanisms for reporting results?
- 18) Enter here any comments on reporting of results (optional).
- 19) Overall, how satisfied are you with the laboratory's service?
- 20) Enter here any comments on overall service provided (optional)
- 21) In 2024, due to the refurbishment project for Colindale Centre, MSL will be temporarily located off site and may not be able to provide our full portfolio of tests, including R&D. Were you aware of the Colindale Centre refurbishment?
- 22) Do you have any concerns to raise around the project or potential impact to services? Please include the information you would like to receive from MSL to understand the potential impact on your Service (optional).
- 23) Do you have any suggestions/recommendations on what improvements you would like in MSL's services (optional)?
- 24) As part of MSL's commitment to improvement of our services we may wish to contact you to discuss some of your comments and scores. If you are happy with this please provide contact details below.