



NEHODS NEWSLETTER



NEHODS - Northern England Haemato-Oncology Diagnostic Service

Winter 2025

NE-HO-HO-HODS at Christmas

It's not just Santa's elves who work hard over the festive period.

Processing cut off: 24th December @ 12pm

We need to receive samples in NEHODS by 12pm Wednesday 24th December to process them same day, any later and these won't be processed until the 27th. The labs are closed bank holidays. Please contact us via 0191 2825078 or nuth.FlowCytometryLab@nhs.net for anything urgent.

On call service is available 9am-12pm 25-28/12/25 via Haematology on call consultant, contact via Newcastle switchboard 0191 2336161.

Weekend Service

We run a voluntary weekend/bank holiday service for emergencies that cannot wait until the next working day. Samples that will be processed include those where the result would have a significant impact on treatment e.g. needing to start chemotherapy over the weekend.

The general process is to contact the consultant on call at Newcastle (via the Newcastle Hospitals switchboard (Telephone: 0191 233 6161) and they will have a copy of the NEHODS consultant on call rota. This should be done before the sample is taken.

The NEHODS consultant will discuss the case and arrange testing as required. This applies to liquid samples is generally only available in the morning and it is the referrer's responsibility to ensure samples arrive urgently. There is no routine trephine/lymph node service at the weekend without prior discussion/arrangement.

New classifications – Haemosys Update

Following the publication of new WHO classification an update is needed to the codes in both Haemosys and on the local LIMS that link to Haemosys. This will ensure that the patient reports reflect these new and correct classifications.

We had aimed to update these codes on Haemosys at the end of November, but some users reported problems, and the update was postponed pending further investigations.

There will need to be a period of Haemosys downtime to facilitate the update work, but we will provide communications to this effect when we are in a position to proceed.

How to get in touch

Website

<https://laboratories.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/services/nehods/>

Contacts

NEHODS Clinical Lead

Dr Andrew McGregor, Consultant Haematologist
akmcgregor@nhs.net 0191 213 8482

NEHODS Operational Manager

Chris Kettle
c.kettle@nhs.net 0191 9177446

Flow Cytometry

Helen Watson, Head of Flow Cytometry
helen.watson9@nhs.net 0191 282 5078

Genetics

Gavin Cuthbert, Newcastle Genetics, Lead Cancer Scientist
gavin.cuthbert@nhs.net



NEHODS Secures Charity Funding for New Multi-Headed Microscope

We are delighted to share that NEHODS has been successful in securing £25,125 of charitable funding from Newcastle Hospitals Charity to purchase a new multi-headed microscope. This investment will significantly enhance our diagnostic service and expand our capacity for high-quality teaching and collaborative case review. While our current equipment meets routine diagnostic requirements, it limits opportunities for real-time, multi-user teaching and slows the review of complex cases. The new microscope will allow several users to view the same specimen simultaneously, improving training efficiency, supporting less-than-full-time trainees, and enabling faster, more accurate collaborative diagnostics.

More than 100 haematology specialist registrars are expected to benefit from this equipment over its 20-year lifespan, alongside consultants, clinical scientists and the wider laboratory team.

We are grateful to Newcastle Hospitals Charity for their generous support and look forward to installing the microscope. Once in place, it will be used extensively in training, service improvement and multidisciplinary teaching across the department.

For more information about the excellent work undertaken by the Newcastle Hospitals Charity please visit their website:

[Newcastle Hospitals Charity](https://charity.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/)

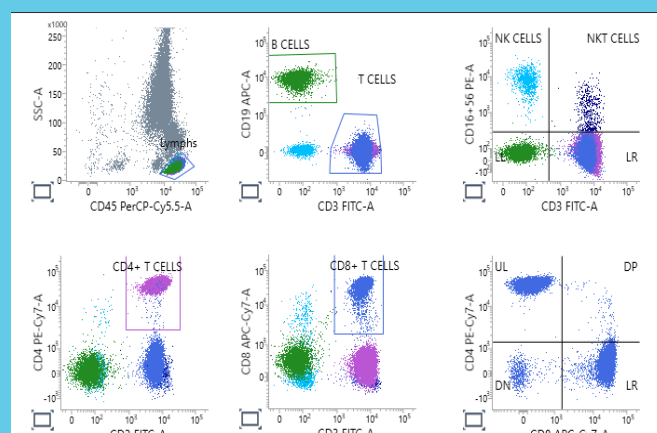
<https://charity.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/>



Upgrade complete! (well, almost)

Three new BD FACSLyrics are now on site, with some final validation underway.

Once complete we should be in a good position to re-vamp some of our existing panels.



Northern Region Haematologists Group Day 20th November 2025

Our annual NEHODS NRHG education update took place on Thursday 20 November at The Common Room (the Old Mining Institute) in Newcastle. We were delighted to welcome colleagues from across the region, with representation from most Trusts and a strong turnout from clinical scientists and specialist registrars – 56 attendees in total



The program covered a broad sweep of current topics in haemato-oncology diagnostics, including talks from invited speakers from Birmingham, Cambridge and Leicester alongside our local experts. Highlights included sessions on managing triple-negative thrombocytosis, updates on genetic testing pathways, flow MRD in AML, detecting germline variants on NGS panels, and a look ahead to innovations in AML genomic analysis.

Feedback on the day was very positive, and we hope everyone left with something useful to take back to their service.

To round things off, 38 of us headed to Pleased to Meet You for food, drinks and a chance to catch up with colleagues in a more relaxed setting.



NORTHERN REGION HAEMATOLOGISTS GROUP NEHODS update: what's new in haematology diagnostics?

Thursday 20 November 2025, 13:00 – 19:00

The Common Room (The Mining Institute), Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SE

12:45		Welcome	
12:45	13:45	Buffet lunch	
13:45	13:50	Introduction	Dr Andrew McGregor Consultant haematologist
13:50	14:20	How I manage triple-negative thrombocytosis	Dr Anna Godfrey Consultant haematologist Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
14:20	14:45	NEHODS genetic testing pathways update	Mr Gavin Cuthbert Clinical Scientist, cancer genetics
14:45	15:15	Interesting morphology cases	Dr Caroline Shrubsole Consultant haematologist
15:15	15:45	Flow MRD in AML	Professor Sylvie Freeman Professor of ImmunoHaematology University of Birmingham
15:45	16:15	Tea	
16:15	16:45	Detecting germline mutations on NGS panels – hints and tips for a haematologist	Dr Richard Martin Consultant clinical geneticist
16:45	17:00	Updates in NEHODS flow	Mrs Helen Watson Healthcare scientist, flow cytometry
17:00	17:30	How to revolutionise genetic analysis for AML? Bionano project update	Mr Gavin Cuthbert Clinical Scientist, cancer genetics
17:30	18:00	How to make the most of your haemato-oncology diagnostic service	Dr Linda Barton Consultant haematologist University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
18:00	18:15	Discussion and questions	Dr Andrew McGregor Consultant haematologist
18:15	Drinks		
19:15	Close		

2025 NEHODS User Survey Summary and Outcomes

The last survey was sent out to NEHODS users was in 2023. The 2023 survey was sent to 82 NEHODS users and only 9 responses were received, despite being left open for 6 weeks.

The 2025 survey was sent to an updated distribution list of 87 users, with 11 responses. This survey was open for only 23 days; one reminder was sent.

The overwhelming majority of respondents were positive about the service that NEHODS provides across the region with users providing excellent comments about our teams and communications. Most users were satisfied NEHODS overall; the greatest satisfaction was seen when interacting with NEHODS staff and the tests in our repertoire.

Users valued the information provided on the website, but some stated that had difficulty finding contact details for urgent advice on the there. However, this information is provided in the NEHODS User Guide on our website (<https://laboratories.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/resources/nehod-northern-england-haemato-oncology-diagnostic-service-user-guide/>).

One user cited not being able to contact the on-call person for flow and that the hospital switchboard didn't know who to contact either. All enquiries of this nature should go through the on-call haematology consultant at NUTH.

When they need to contact NEHODS routinely, nearly all users will opt to email in the first instance.

Users were satisfied with all our services (Flow, Genetics, BMT reporting and LN reporting), but some users stated they have issues accessing the results due to the speed of the Haemosys interface. Some users did not fully understand the relationship between NEHODS and the Northeast and Yorkshire Genomic Laboratory Hub.

The table below summarises the main issues highlighted from the survey and details the actions we aim to take to resolve these for our users:

Issue	Resolution
Some users had not yet visited the NEHODS website.	The NEHODS website (https://laboratories.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/services/nehods/) should be promoted to users to ensure it is visited more frequently. Promotion of website at NEHODS meetings, in the NEHODS twice-yearly newsletter and also in NEHODS team email signatures.
Some users reported issues with Haemosys Slow speeds	The perceived website speeds likely reflect the age of the server on which Haemosys is hosted. The server is being upgraded in early 2026.
Slow speeds	Contact AES to determine if they are aware of any reasons why a perceived slow-down could be occurring and how to resolve this.
Some users reported issues with Haemosys Access to Haemosys	Examine the feasibility of providing a link to Haemosys from the NEHODS website (and see if the reciprocal is possible).
Contacting NEHODS for urgent advice out of hours One user stated it is not always easy to access the person on call for flow	To determine how the person on call for flow is contacted by switchboard, how switchboard are aware of this and where this is documented.
One user highlighted that lymph node IHC results appear to take longer (up to 2 weeks) to reach their Trust.	An audit of the time taken to issue LN IHC results broken down into the referrer, is now planned.
Understanding of the role of the local GLH and its impact on NEHODS was varied amongst our users.	A summary article for the NEHODS newsletter detailing this relationship would be helpful for users.
Comment from survey: "Can you have a software other than AES to integrate with MEDITECH?"	Engage with South of Tyne to discuss this.
Comment from survey: "NEHODS do not handle ALL MRD samples, which often causes confusion amongst junior staff and nurses who take samples at local sites. It would be much easier if NEHODS also collects these samples and send them to London."	NEHODS to engage with the region to ensure a pathway is followed where samples are taken locally and then sent to Newcastle to coordinate MRD sample testing.
Comment from survey: "I don't think we are given enough information about the role of the GLH and the use of whole genome sequencing. I am not sure if there is an agreed list of indication or pathway."	https://laboratories.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/services/nehods/testing-and-techniques/ The NEHODS diagnostic pathways can be found on our website, via the above link.