NCTC News - December 2016

NCTC wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

NCTC: A year in research

During 2016 NCTC bacterial strains and associated data were cited in more than 100 publications by scientists worldwide. We reviewed some of these papers, noting that researchers based at institutes in 52 different countries contributed to this array of studies. The studies reflect the challenges presented to scientists globally in the early 21st century and also important local themes, including some quite unexpected subjects.

The studies include method evaluation, outbreak investigation and antimicrobial resistance research. One publication reports on the whole genome sequencing of the 2016 WHO gonococcal reference strains for antimicrobial susceptibility testing. These strains are now available from NCTC as a panel (see below).

Read more

European Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (EUCAST)

NCTC supplies a wide range of strains that can be used as antimicrobial susceptibility testing controls. EUCAST recommends a specific set of strains for routine and extended internal quality control (QC).

The strains for routine QC are used to monitor test performance and the quality of the materials used. The strains for extended QC are complementary to the routine QC strains and are recommended for the detection of specific resistance mechanisms. Use of these control strains aims to ensure that the tests result in the correct susceptibility categorisation.

Find out more

EUCAST QC tables 6.1

Read the leaflet

To ensure your freeze-dried cultures grow, NCTC regularly carries out viability checks on organisms that can be difficult to culture, these include organisms such as Campylobacter, Helicobacter and Neisseria.

New WHO control strains for Neisseria gonorrhoeae antimicrobial susceptibility testing available now!

14 well characterised WHO N. gonorrhoeae reference strains are now available from NCTC. All the strains have full reference genomes available and have been extensively characterised (MLST, NG-MAST type, plasmid status etc.).

It is envisaged that these strains will be used as quality control strains for laboratories undertaking either molecular diagnostics and/or AMR testing on N. gonorrhoeae isolates for surveillance or individual patient management purposes.

Find out more
NCTC re-accreditation

In the summer of 2016 NCTC relocated to Colindale in North West London from their laboratory in South Mimms. Relocation meant that United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) accreditation to ISO 17025:2005 had to be reassessed at the new site.

UKAS audited the same NCTC activities in the Colindale laboratory and on the 24th June 2016 it was confirmed that the accreditation had been successfully retained. This achievement involved a huge amount of work by the teams based in South Mimms and Colindale, and also by the Culture Collections Quality Assurance team in Porton.

The requirement for re-accreditation due to relocation is particularly important when considering the impact of relocation on laboratories. This result gives the laboratory and stakeholders confidence that despite the change in location, the quality of our products remains high.

Find out about laboratory accreditation

View NCTC’s ISO/IEC 17025:2005 certificate

The Nagoya Protocol and access and benefit sharing explained

The Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use (ABS) is a supplementary agreement to the convention on biological diversity (CBD). It provides a transparent legal framework for the effective implementation of the agreement to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits resulting form the use of genetic resources.

The access and benefit-sharing clearing-house (ABSCH) is a platform for exchanging information on ABS and is a key tool for facilitating the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

Watch the video to see how the Nagoya Protocol may affect your work. Find out more

ABSCH website

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