

MY LAB

THE BUSIEST THORACIC CENTRE IN THE UK

Clare McCann gives a guided tour of her laboratory at the Golden Jubilee National Hospital in Clydebank, near Glasgow.

Serving a population of over five million, the Golden Jubilee National Hospital is the busiest thoracic centre in the UK, providing all heart and lung surgery for the West of Scotland. It is also one of Europe's largest and best-known elective orthopaedic hospitals. The clinical laboratory at the Golden Jubilee provides excellent on-site services to meet the challenging demands of a modern health service. Our competent and talented multi-disciplinary team, made up of about 40 staff, consists of medical laboratory assistants, biomedical scientists, transfusion practitioners and consultants, working alongside infection control.

The laboratory provides a consultant-led 24-hour service in blood transfusion, clinical chemistry, haematology and microbiology, with approximately 320,000 samples processed per year. In addition, there is a small satellite pathology laboratory that is staffed by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to carry out urgent on-site investigations, such as frozen sections. With collaborative team working, the laboratory has also been able to provide a new dedicated service for the diagnosis of prosthetic joint infection, in partnership with Zimmer Biomet. The delivery of this service has been both



exciting and challenging, and we are now in a pilot phase, successfully testing joint fluid samples from patients across the UK. We hope to extensively roll out this service in the near future.

We recently began COVID-19 testing as part of the national effort to increase laboratory testing capacity. Achieving the quick and efficient turnaround, from receipt of analyser training, to validation and then going live, was a real team effort. The first sample we received was from a heart transplant patient, who was relying on testing to get the go-ahead for surgery. Reporting the result within one hour allowed the transplant to proceed quickly. This felt like a real contribution to front-line patient care, and a great achievement for the laboratory. Our unique multi-disciplinary approach allows COVID-19 samples to be processed 24/7, ensuring the highest quality of patient care.

Quality is fundamental to our service.

We have been accredited to the ISO 15189 quality standard, administered by UKAS since 2017. Our well-trained and experienced staff are committed to meeting the needs and requirements of service users by operating a quality management system that includes comprehensive internal quality control and external quality assurance.

The Golden Jubilee believes in supporting the training,

ongoing learning and development of staff. In recent years we have had staff complete the MSc in biomedical science, registration and specialist portfolios, certificate of expert practice, and certificate of achievement part one. We also facilitate the third-year placement training of students from local universities – Glasgow Caledonian University and University of the West of Scotland – enabling a new generation of highly skilled and qualified biomedical scientists to join the workforce.

The laboratory staff at the Golden Jubilee National Hospital are dedicated, hard-working, and flexible to the needs of the service. This has recently been exemplified by the readiness to adapt the shift systems to cater to the radical changes in NHS Scotland in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I feel proud to work at the Golden Jubilee, where patients are always at the heart of progress. 