

Faster response times for blood tests

The Region of Southern Denmark has optimised result times for blood tests at two of its hospitals. Technology has been put to use at the locations in Vejle and Esbjerg.

**From the staff magazine 'Kommunikation', Sygehus Lillebælt Hospital.
'Fast turnaround on blood test results so treatment starts earlier'**

Pneumatic tube systems for blood samples save hours of waiting time for staff in the acute departments. Patients can be assessed faster, so treatment can begin.

The blood tests can be heard whistling through pneumatic tubes from the acute assessment section (AVA in Danish) at Vejle Hospital, and seconds later the tubes land at the laboratory centre, where they are analysed. In the course of half an hour, the staff have the results of important blood tests, which are absolutely vital in the process of assessing acute patients.

Previously, it could take several hours for the results of blood tests to arrive. The laboratory assistants used to go their rounds at fixed times of day to collect blood samples, and the routine for results took two or three hours. Consultant Helle Skærbaek is very pleased with the effective new system.

"The sooner treatment can begin, the more the patient benefits. So it is highly satisfying that in our work with the daily flow through the department we don't have to wait for the blood test results any more. We can see that response times have become significantly shorter," says Dr Skærbaek.

From the staff magazine 'Sydvesten', Sydvestjysk Sygehus hospital

There are also pneumatic tube systems in Esbjerg to transfer samples from the wards and outpatient clinic to the new laboratory building, where the 'analysis conveyor' is a central part of the work routines. The conveyor can:

- Handle 1000 samples per hour
- Centrifuge and carry out chemical analyses, and remove the stoppers of the blood sample tubes and replace them
- Accommodate new test methods in the future
- Continue to work, even when a test function breaks down, because there is a duplicate
- Keep working 24 /7/365

"Response time, every time. If you take quality for granted, then response time is absolutely the most important parameter. For a blood test, response time is going down to one hour maximum, and opening up completely new perspectives for the departments," in Medical Director Niels Korsgaard's opinion.

In the outpatients' clinic it means that the patient just has time for a cup of coffee and one of the popular weeklies in the waiting room, and then the results of the blood test are there. That is instead of having to come to the hospital on two separate days, once to have the test taken, and once to hear the results.