

September 2011

HbA1c (Glycated haemoglobin) laboratory data formal change (from % to mmol/mol) – goes live 3 October 2011

The haemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) assay is commonly used to indicate a person's average blood glucose (sugar) levels over the previous 2 to 3 months. Internationally, laboratories have changed the way HbA1c results are reported. While the actual numerical result of the units are different, the test gives the same basic information about glucose control over the previous 2 to 3 months. The sector agrees this change needs to be made in New Zealand to make it easier to compare HbA1c results from different laboratories and research trials around the world.

Two years ago the sector was informed that the reporting of HbA1c by laboratories would change in August 2011. The change was not initiated by the Ministry of Health (the Ministry), but by the sector itself. For the past 24 months, laboratories have been dual reporting of HbA1c data – both in percentage (%) and mmol/mol. On **3 October 2011** the dual reporting (%) will stop and health professionals will be required to use the mmol/mol measure in their practice.

The Ministry is leading the process in collaboration with District Health Boards of New Zealand (DHBNZ) and the national clinical leadership group, the New Zealand Society for the Study of Diabetes, including publicising the impact of the change for patients and primary care.

DHBNZ, through the PHO Performance Programme, is working with laboratories, vendors (all Practice Management Software, Decision Support Tools) and PHOs to implement and subsequently deploy the required changes.

Vendors have been provided with the following conversion table to assist with the changes.

Vendors and/or health professionals can also calculate HbA1c values at

www.diabetes.org.uk/hba1c

Resources can be ordered by either emailing moh@wickliffe.co.nz or by phoning (04) 496 2277, quoting HP 5406 for the A5 information sheet and HP 5405 for the wallet card. Include your name, physical address and contact phone number. Resources are in packs of 100.

HbA1c % (old units)	HbA1c mmol/mol (new units)
4	20
5	31
6	42
6.5	48
7	53
7.5	58
8	64
9	75
10	86
11	97
12	108
13	119
14	130
15	140
16	151
17	162
18	173
19	184
20	195
21	206
22	217
23	228