



Overview of the
new SYNLAB/NHS
pathology partnership
in South East London

CO-DEVELOPING A WORLD-LEADING,
INTEGRATED PATHOLOGY NETWORK



Introduction

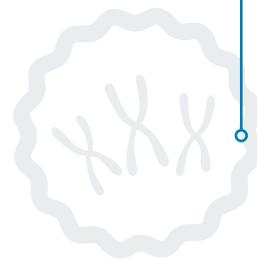
SYNLAB is forming a new pathology partnership with Guy's and St Thomas', and King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trusts to deliver and transform NHS pathology services across South East London. Starting on 1 April 2021, the contract runs for 15 years, with the option to extend for a further five.



Serving a population of around 1.7 million people, South East London's pathology service will continue to have the needs of patients and local people at its heart. The new partnership will provide diagnostics, testing and digital pathology services for hospitals, GPs and other NHS healthcare providers, as well as for a number of other consumers across the UK. SYNLAB and the NHS see next steps as being an evolution of local pathology services, building on the strengths of today's service provided by Viapath and the NHS. The same excellent scientists, clinicians and other colleagues will continue to work under new partnership arrangements, and will be directly involved in delivering tangible improvements both to the quality of patient care, and to the experience of clinicians providing that care. Faster testing services and state-of-the-art laboratories will help to improve outcomes for patients, enable more

people to be cared for in the community instead of being admitted to hospital, and support the NHS in managing patient flows within its hospitals more effectively. The new partnership will improve ways of working for clinicians and scientists, and will also deliver better value for money for the NHS.

The NHS will also benefit from SYNLAB's global laboratory and diagnostic network, which will provide access to a wide range of clinical, scientific and operational expertise, as well as innovative research and development on an international scale. This has proven to be extremely valuable in SYNLAB's existing partnerships with the NHS, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic where UK access to supplies was critical, and where knowledge of how SYNLAB's diagnostic testing services had responded elsewhere in Europe helped to inform and strengthen our own response here in the UK.



SYNLAB's existing partnerships:

The Christie Pathology Partnership in Manchester

Pathology First in Essex

Southwest Pathology Services in Somerset

Clinically led

The SYNLAB/NHS partnership model will ensure that pathology services are led by clinicians. SYNLAB will be responsible for day-to-day service delivery as well as the transformation programme. The NHS will continue to take the lead role in setting the strategic direction of pathology services,

linked to the development of other local health and care services. There will be an increase in the number of clinical leadership positions, with some changes to roles and responsibilities. This will build upon and strengthen the arrangements in place today.

Co-developing a hub and spoke pathology network

As well as delivering pathology services, SYNLAB will be responsible for transforming existing hospital-based services into a world-leading, integrated hub and spoke pathology network by 2024. This responds to the ambitions set out in the NHS Long-Term Plan, which will not only improve the quality of patient care, but will also see the NHS save millions of pounds on pathology testing services across the UK.

Over the next four years, a purpose-built, state-of-the-art 'hub' laboratory will be developed at Friars Bridge Court in Blackfriars Road, providing access to new and improved testing services and equipment. On-site hospital 'spoke' laboratories will be developed to provide essential services, which focus on the rapid turnaround of urgent tests (e.g. for inpatients or patients attending accident and emergency departments). Some specialist pathology services will continue to be provided from existing on-site laboratories, in close collaboration with the clinical teams.

The hub and spoke model is based on the principle of separating urgent from non-urgent pathology workflows. In two other UK hub and spoke partnerships, SYNLAB has demonstrated that this approach can dramatically improve testing turnaround times and free up valuable NHS hospital estate to use for other patient services. This has also been the case in SYNLAB's various other hub and spoke pathology services overseas.

The new pathology partnership will significantly extend the footprint of the existing service, with many more organisations using these pathology services than is the case today. As a result, the new service will become one of the largest consolidated networks in the UK.



To date, the following NHS organisations have confirmed their participation in the new pathology partnership:

- Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (partner)
- King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (partner)
- South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (partner)
- Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust (partner)
- NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group, encompassing GP practices, clinics and other community services across the boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lewisham, Lambeth and Southwark
- Various NHS tertiary services across the UK



Timescales



Dec 2020 onwards

- **SYNLAB and the NHS** agree the future vision for pathology services and confirm shared goals and ambitions.
- **NHS/SYNLAB/Viapath** due diligence process is conducted (getting to know and understand each other in detail).



Apr 2021

- **The new NHS/SYNLAB** partnership commences. SYNLAB takes responsibility for Viapath's service delivery and transformation.
- The Viapath brand will remain in place until September 2021.



Apr to July 2021

- A number of King's College Hospital colleagues transfer to the new pathology partnership.
- Viapath colleagues and service user representatives have the opportunity to get involved in developing and agreeing a new name, brand and values for the service.



May 2021 onwards

- Key stakeholders and colleagues from Viapath (services, analytics and group), SYNLAB and the NHS are engaged in the development of plans to deliver the overall vision for the partnership. This includes transforming present service arrangements into a hub and spoke pathology model.



Autumn 2021

- **Launch** of new partnership brand.
- **Pathology staff** associated with GP direct access testing in Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham transfer over to the partnership.



2021 – Mar 2024

- **Service transformation** takes place and transition to the new hub and spoke arrangements are implemented. The hub laboratory will be completed and Essential Service Laboratories will be refurbished.



2023

- **Epic Beaker LIMS** implemented at Guy's and St Thomas' and King's College Hospital. This will be integrated with the Trusts' new Epic electronic health record system.



Apr 2024 – Mar 2036

- **New arrangements** are embedded and service is now 'business as usual', with continuous improvement a part of everyday working practices.



Apr 2036 + 5 years

- **Partnership contract ends.**



Delivering tangible benefits to the patients, clinicians, scientists and the NHS

The new pathology partnership is expected to deliver a number of benefits. Here are just some of them:

Improved quality of patient care and experience: Urgent and routine tests will be turned around more quickly following service transformation. This will enable faster clinical decisions regarding care, a reduction in overnight admissions, quicker discharge from hospital, and speedier transitions to the appropriate clinical pathway. The fast-tracking of urgent GP requests will also enable more conditions to be managed within the community, helping to prevent unwarranted hospital attendances and admissions.

Investing for the future: SYNLAB's investment will provide the NHS with state-of-the-art laboratories, purpose-built to meet the needs of modern-day healthcare services. SYNLAB will also invest in the latest technology and equipment, providing access to a wider repertoire of tests and testing capability.

Enhancing professional development:

A world-leading training centre will be developed for scientists and laboratory colleagues, and a specific training facility will be created to support junior doctors. This will enable existing translational research capabilities to be maintained, as well as enhanced. Tailored training and development programmes will also be provided to primary care teams.

Digitally innovative: IT systems will link laboratories with referral sites, providing easier and faster access to testing services and results by clinicians in hospitals as well as in the community. As a result, clinicians will be able to manage a patient's care more effectively across primary, community and acute healthcare services. As well as integration with electronic patient records and care plans, there will be complete visibility of test results across all care settings. Clinicians will be able to work remotely away from the laboratory, with full digital access to testing systems and the ability to view images and results



This is a once in a generation opportunity to enhance population health through the delivery of a world leading pathology service. SYNLAB will bring the expertise, resources and investment to modernise and transform pathology services, enabling clinicians and scientists to improve patient care across South East London and beyond.

Tracy Ellison
Transformation Director,
SYNLAB UK & Ireland



From the outset, clinical leaders have been at the forefront in designing the pathology service at Pathology First - a partnership between SYNLAB and the NHS in Essex. We work hand in hand with SYNLAB colleagues to drive improvement, and to develop and introduce new services. Our collective approach has seen us improve pathways from referral through to treatment, and the patient is always at the heart of everything we do.

Dr Faisal Bin-Reza
Group Director of Pathology Consultant
Microbiologist, Mid and South Essex
NHS Foundation Trust



online. In accordance with information governance requirements, improved sharing and use of technology and data across all organisations will also reduce the number of tests which are either duplicated or clinically inappropriate.

The market-leading *Epic Beaker* Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) will be implemented as the core system. Beaker will be fully integrated with Guy's and St Thomas' and King's College Hospital's new Epic electronic health record system and, as such, will provide both visibility of test results across all care settings, as well as integrated reporting. Order communications and the delivery of results for primary and community health care and mental health trusts will be fully integrated with the Beaker LIMS. Digital pathology systems will also be introduced, for example in digital histopathology, to enable clinicians to work remotely and to assist the work of multi-disciplinary teams.

Benefits across the health and care system: Joint working with health and care partners across the Integrated Care System will directly support improvements in patient pathways

across primary, secondary and tertiary care. The partnership arrangement includes developing a framework to include patient stratification, referral guidance and demand optimisation. A single database for results will enable a 'single version of the truth' to support the delivery of integrated care packages.

Enhanced experience with better access for primary care clinicians: Community services will benefit from improvements in consistency, reliability and flexibility of pathology testing services, including collection arrangements, electronic ordering and improved access to current GP services.

Community phlebotomy services expansion: Community phlebotomy services will be expanded, supported by new community hubs, an online phlebotomy booking system, and out-of-hours access to support for urgent queries. New point-of-care pathways will be created where appropriate. Urgent requests from GPs will be fast-tracked and prioritised over high-volume routine activity, helping to prevent avoidable hospital admissions and increase the number of patients cared for within community settings.

International access: The NHS will gain access to international research and development through SYNLAB's global diagnostic network, as well as scientific and clinical expertise within specialist laboratories and hospitals across Europe, shared learning and best practice. NHS partners will also have access to the latest data provided by SYNLAB's established research and development partnerships, offering validation and verification of breakthrough analysis. The partnership with SYNLAB will also bring increased buying power and economies of scale.

Better use of valuable NHS estate: The development of a hub laboratory will release more than 50% of existing pathology space on hospital sites, which can be recommissioned by the NHS for other important patient services.

A responsive service: SYNLAB/NHS partnerships have proved their agility and flexibility to scale up quickly, providing a responsive pathology service that can meet both predicted and unforeseen increases in demand.

Better value for money: The partnership with SYNLAB will enable greater capacity for providing testing services at the same cost, allowing the NHS pound to stretch significantly further. On commencement of the new pathology partnership, the NHS will see immediate, and ongoing, cost benefits.

Performance management: New, integrated IT systems will automatically populate performance management dashboards, resulting in improved monitoring against Key Performance Indicators.



For more information visit
www.synlab.co.uk



Got a comment or question?

We welcome all views about the new partnership and transformation programme, as well as suggestions about how we can enhance our communications with you.

Please email us any time on
contactus@synlab.co.uk



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