1. National Patient Safety Alert (NPSA)
   Bowel Cleansing Agents

An NPSA alert has been issued requiring action to reduce the risk of harm from oral bowel cleansing solutions.
For the full NPSA alert go to

In compliance with the above NPSA alert the Radiology and Endoscopy departments have had to modify how patients are referred for Barium Enema’s and how repeat Colonoscopies are arranged.

Historically, it has been the Trust policy to post the Citrafleet laxative to the patients with their appointment details. This practise cannot carry on in accordance with the above alert.

The changes in practise necessary are as follows;
A patient will present to their GP surgery with lower GI symptoms a barium enema or colonoscopy referral may be decided as the course of investigation.
• In order to refer your patient for either a barium enema or a colonoscopy clinic referral a FBC with Urea and Electrolytes are required within last three months of the referral.
• An attached safety checklist must be completed for only Barium Enema studies and repeat Colonoscopy procedures, that the Endoscopy Department will notify the patient and GP about, and returned to the relevant department by either fax or post with the Imaging request form.

Once the Radiology or Endoscopy department have received the completed checklist they will arrange an appointment with an FP10 prescription for the bowel cleansing agent i.e., citrafleet. A request for these examinations cannot proceed without the assessment checklist completed.

The checklist can be downloaded from the Trust GP information website nww.asph.nhs.uk under services and GP resources
2. **Pathology Update**
   a) **Electronic Requesting & Reporting now available**

The Pathology department would like to inform our service users that the Sunquest ICE GP requesting and reporting system will be rolled out to GP’s over the next 6 months, starting April 2010.

The system picks up the patient demographics from the GP computer system and transfers it to the ICE requesting system.

The system has the benefit of;
- Using the NHS number as a primary identifier
- Guides user with selection of test and appropriateness of test.
- Avoids the use of handwritten request forms that can often be illegible, and enables results to be filed electronically in the correct patient record
- There is the potential for a faster turnaround of samples as a result of improved workload planning and receipt of complete and accurate information.
- As the GP’s have access to all the patient’s results, including results from any investigations carried out within the acute setting, there will be less unnecessary duplicate testing
- Sample labeling errors will be reduced as a result of using printed bar-coded labels on all specimens

Any questions should be directed to Elaine Moore, Pathology Quality Manager or James Tew, Pathology Deputy Computer Systems Manager on 01932 723424.

See screen grab below:
b) Cryoglobulin tests

Please note that we are no longer able to support this service at Ashford Hospital and any patient requiring the blood test will need to be bled at St Peters.

3. Ophthalmology Update for the Heart of Hounslow Polyclinic

The Eye clinics at the Heart of Hounslow will be happy to triage any patients from GPs that are requiring immediate attention of an Ophthalmologist (acute). All other, non Emergency referrals must have a letter faxed to 01784 884640 Eye secretaries at Ashford Hospital.

For an acute Eye referral they can ring the Heart of Hounslow Eye clinics, Mon-Thursday 9-5pm, 1-5pm Friday and speak to the nurse in charge which is usually Deputy Sister Bindhu Thomas on 02086301831. If they are unable to be seen at the Heart of Hounslow, they can call Ashford Eye Clinic on 01784 884680. All these calls are triaged and appointments given as needed not necessarily on the same day.

Please do not to send patients to the eye clinic to be seen without telephoning first, as it is not a walk in service. These patients have to be seen on top of already fully booked clinics.