

Confidential
GPs

Date 27 August 2022
Our Ref HPT 24523
Enquiries to Health Protection Team
Direct Line Direct Line 0300 790 6264
Email: Health.Protection@nhsllothian.scot.nhs.uk

Dear Colleague

E.COLI O157 CASES ASSOCIATED WITH MUSSELBURGH PRIVATE NURSERY, STONEYBANK (26 August 2022)

NHS Lothian Health Protection Team has been working with East Lothian Environmental Health Department, the Care Inspectorate and Public Health Scotland to investigate 5 nurseries with vomiting and diarrhoea in Haddington and Musselburgh, including 3 with E. coli O157.

As a precaution, the Health Protection Team has excluded staff and children at Musselburgh Private Nursery Stoneybank and are requesting that **all children and staff** submit **two separate stool** samples, at least 24 hours apart for the clearance process.

This is regardless of whether they have been tested already in the past week.

We do not know yet whether there is E. coli O157 at the nursery, but there are clear links with a neighbouring nursery with confirmed cases.

Staff and parents have been asked to submit their samples to their GP for delivery to the laboratories. We would be grateful if you can supply your patient with two stool pots, one marked as 'sample 1' and one marked as 'sample 2'. Each sample will also need a separate ICE label as detailed below, not obscuring the numbering of the sample (i.e. sample 1 and sample 2 as detailed above).

The Health Protection Team will give results to patients, and give further advice or lift exclusions at that point. GP practices must not share results with families. If parents have questions then they can call an NHS 24 helpline set up for this outbreak, on 0800 22 44 88.

Important information on submitting samples the requested samples

The samples need to be sent to the Scottish E.coli Reference Laboratory (SERL). The samples must be labelled with the patient details and date and time of when the sample was taken (not when the label was printed). The patients will be advised to write the date and time of the sample on the label. Once submitted to your practice the samples should be sent to lab for testing. Samples do not need to be refrigerated, so if a sample is

handed in late in the day it can just be added to the microbiology bag for the lab van pick up in the morning.

You can find the correct label by searching for 'HPT' in your clinical system (ICE), the date of collection must be put on the container by the patient. Please add the code '**HPT24523**' on the request form.

Please see image below for information on ICE:



I would like to stress the importance of notifying the Health Protection Team of any currently symptomatic cases of diarrhoea or vomiting in children you see over the next few days, especially those who attend Musselburgh Private Nursery or have links with the nursery. Please also note previous letters about E. coli O157 nursery outbreaks in Haddington.

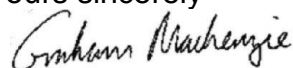
Can I also stress to you that if you do see any children from this nursery with suspected E.coli O157 infection current national guidance states that:

- Patients with bloody diarrhoea should not be treated with antimotility drugs;
- Patients with bloody diarrhoea should not be treated routinely with antibiotics because of the theoretical risk of promoting haemolytic uraemic syndrome.

An NHS 24 helpline has been set up for this outbreak, on 0800 22 44 88. A Frequently Asked Questions document is available on the NHS Lothian webpage.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Health Protection Team on 0300 790 6264 if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Graham Mackenzie, Consultant in Public Health Medicine