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HORIBAABX
Diagnostics

ANALYSIS anywhere

with HORIBA

Welcome

Welcome to our new look newsletter which we have reintroduced for two main reasons. Firstly because in this age of impersonal email bombardment, many of you have said that you appreciate printed material that can be read at leisure. Secondly, and more importantly, we want to update you on some significant changes taking place within the HORIBA Group.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative. In addition to product news, we have tried to cover a broad range of key business topics – managed service contracts, training, LEAN and Data Management –

topics you have told us are key to the smooth running of your laboratory.

On the business side of HORIBA ABX, we recently moved to new premises in Northampton, now sharing facilities with other members of the HORIBA Group. HORIBA is a truly global analytical company with instruments and systems for applications ranging from automotive R&D, process and environmental monitoring, semiconductor manufacturing and metrology, and the more familiar medical diagnostics. So, as a group we offer analysis in air, solids and of course liquids. Our move is part of a planned global business realignment that will enable us to fully exploit synergies between the many HORIBA group companies, cross-fertilise technology ideas and expand customer support resources. The “one company” approach will ultimately ensure an improved service for all our customers. Also, we are particularly excited about our



current pipeline of R&D projects which will see a number of innovative products coming to market.

Finally, another major focus for us during this busy period is customer retention. We are delighted with early results of this important initiative (see Hot News). This newsletter is just one way we can keep you in touch with such developments and other news at HORIBA ABX. Please let us know what you would like to read about in future issues, or indeed if you yourself have a story to tell. This is your newsletter.

Cleve Wright
UK Manager

HOT News

H New contracts secured

- ... Following five years of excellent working relations,
- Ashford and St Peters NHS Trust** has extended its haematology contract with HORIBA ABX for another three years. HORIBA ABX has also been awarded a new contract at the **Princess Elizabeth Hospital Guernsey**, as well as successfully winning the tender at **Airedale General Hospital** - both sites have chosen new systems for reliable, routine haematology analysis with data management. **H** **New Arteriosclerosis treatment...**
- an ABX Pentra 400 clinical chemistry analyser has recently been installed at **Cambridge Theronostics Ltd (CTL)** for neuropeptide clinical trials sample analyses. The company has developed a novel pharmaceutical product that should provide substantial benefits and health improvements in patients with coronary heart disease. CTL is seeking rapid regulatory approval for Ateronon[®]™ and plans to launch it this year.



*Cleve
Wright*

2008 is certainly a time for change and new beginnings within HORIBA ABX – in the UK, across Europe and across the HORIBA Group itself. Here we discuss new facilities and logistics, but you can also read more on our new products and services in Company News on the back page.

Specialist reagent distribution now direct within UK

In direct response to customer feedback and as part of a continuous customer service improvement programme, all haematology reagents are now warehoused, picked and supplied directly from a local logistics and warehousing facility in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

The new supply chain is deployed in partnership with specialist healthcare distributors Arvato Services.

“We are delighted to have been able to provide a solution to our customer requests for a highly efficient, reliable and direct reagent delivery service,” commented Cleve Wright, UK Manager, HORIBA ABX. “We selected Arvato Services as our new supply partner due to their proven expertise in distributing healthcare products throughout the UK.”



New UK offices

In order to offer ever better levels of service and to rationalise its global activities in the UK, the HORIBA Group has brought three business segments together geographically. In April, HORIBA ABX UK left their Chicksands site and moved about 30 miles away into new 1,650m² premises at the HORIBA Instruments site established in 1992 in Northampton.

At this location the HORIBA ABX UK team of 28 employees, exclusively dedicated to customer service and support, has joined HORIBA Instruments Limited and HORIBA STEC, which have a combined workforce of over 100 employees working at this site.

New Beginnings

Bernd Robke, Arvato Services Healthcare; Cleve Wright, HORIBA ABX UK & Guillaume Rossel, HORIBA ABX Headquarters, France



HORIBA ABX invests €8 million in new reagent plant

In September 2008 HORIBA ABX will open a new €8 million consolidated reagent plant in response to the company's continued growth in haematology and clinical chemistry. Located in Montpellier in the south of France, this state-of-the-art facility spans some 4,400 m² and almost doubles the manufacturing capacity to 13,000 tonnes of reagents per annum, compared to the previous 7,000 tonnes. The new plant will also enable HORIBA ABX to centralise all other reagent related activities - research, commercial operations and logistics - onto one site.

According to Bertrand de Castelneau, HORIBA MEDICAL Segment Leader, the investment represents both a sign of confidence in the market and determination to improve service levels to an expanding customer base. “Over the last few years, through a combination of hard work by our highly professional staff and an innovative product range, HORIBA ABX has both maintained its leading position in haematology in Europe and made inroads into the highly competitive clinical chemistry market. We regard the development, manufacture and supply of high quality reagents as central to the continuation of our success. By expanding our production capacity for both haematology and biochemistry reagents, as well as bringing research and development, and logistics under one roof, this major new investment creates a flagship site for HORIBA ABX.”

Technical Relations

Training revolutions

HORIBA ABX has always gone the extra mile to provide customer training. Flexible courses have been introduced to provide regular updates for core laboratory personnel. As well as ensuring smooth operation of all analysers, the training also covers in-depth troubleshooting.

A recent analysis of calls to our support helpline revealed that well over 80% of calls could have been avoided if a trained member of staff had fully assessed the situation prior to the call. Furthermore, in over 50% of these cases an engineer was sent out 'blind' to physically assess the situation. This not only leads to increased time spent by customers and ourselves, but importantly creates unnecessary and costly interruptions to laboratory services.

Having assessed the current situation, we believe the best way forward is to ensure all users are authorised and certified before using our dedicated support helpline. HORIBA ABX service and support personnel will be contacting customers in the coming months to discuss how labs can ensure they have a sufficient number of staff trained to the required level. We value your input!

At HORIBA ABX we have been reviewing and improving our training systems in order to reduce instrument downtime for our customers. Here we discuss proposed changes to our support procedures as well as developments to the ABX Pentra ML Data Manager.

Managing Your Data



Data management capability is increasingly the differentiator in haematology as with other hospital diagnostic departments. Peter Grace, IT Manager at HORIBA ABX explains the issues involved, drawing on his experience working in a laboratory and then as a hospital information systems consultant.

Staffing continues to be a major issue for most labs, both in retention and recruitment. Workloads are rising 10-15% per annum, fuelled by the demand to provide analysis services to a wider range of 'customers', GPs, wards and outreach clinics. Although most labs now run modern high volume analysers, many are still unaware of the real difference effective data management can bring. Change may seem difficult at times, but the long term benefits can be substantial. For example, auto-validation is ideal for streamlining the progress of samples through the laboratory and substantially saves

time for qualified staff. Labs may see others utilising this technology but hold back, perhaps because of the time investment, or a feeling that the end product will be what the supplier wants, not what the laboratory requires.

At HORIBA ABX we go out of our way to avoid this, tailoring our ABX Pentra ML Data Manager system to really meet individual needs. The ABX Pentra ML offers clear differentiating benefits from other systems and is definitely not just a bolted-on PC! For a start it gives a constant picture of laboratory workflow so nothing slips through the net. Comprehensive pre- and post-analytical information is automatically generated to enable rapid decisions on whether further testing is actually required. Furthermore, the ABX Pentra ML has an open rules base with all ranges user defined, whilst demographics as well as results can be included. Rules can also be used to add further tests automatically, for instance, requesting a film on all of the haematology clinic patients.

Work continues with system additions and upgrades from our IT development team, based in Montpellier. This is a real two-way process as once customers realise we really do listen, ideas start flooding in. We believe the ABX Pentra ML Data Manager has a real edge - a flexible practical solution genuinely orientated to customer needs.

Clinical case studies
We need your help!

HORIBA ABX is in the process of compiling clinical case studies to produce a booklet for distribution to customers and also to provide training materials. So, does your laboratory have any interesting case studies you would like us to include? If so we would be most grateful to receive them. For more information please go to www.horiba-abx.com/uk or contact Mandy Campbell at mcampbell@uk.abx.fr

It is always beneficial to receive feedback from our customers and the feedback section of the HORIBA ABX website is a great place for us to share their experiences. Included here are snippets from the website, with the full case studies available online.

Analysis

Managing workload in Darent Valley



Pauline Bigsby BMS3 and Simon Jordan BMS2 with their new haematology system

With increasing population growth in the Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust area, covering Western Europe's largest regeneration project - the Thames Gateway - it comes as little surprise that the haematology laboratory at Darent Valley Hospital has been experiencing annual workload increases of >5%. Requiring analysers that could cope with the high throughput of full blood counts managed by the department, Darent Valley has installed

both the ABX Pentra DX 120 SPS and ABX Pentra DF 120 SPS haematology platforms. Just one year following installation of the new analysers, the haematology laboratory is comfortably managing 800-900 blood counts a day.

The reliable ABX Pentra DX 120 SPS and ABX Pentra DF 120 SPS analysers fulfil all the needs of the laboratory, as Keith Holmes, Haematology Laboratory Manager explained, "We wanted a reliable,

affordable analytical set up with new but proven technology for our generally routine workload. Having undertaken an unbiased decision making process, considering both technical and financial aspects, including a five year life time cost analysis, HORIBA ABX ticked all the right boxes for us."

For the full case study, please visit www.horiba-abx.com/uk/feedback

Point-of-care haematology in oncology

The arrival of an ABX Pentra 60C+ haematology analyser at the Macmillan Primrose Unit within Bedford Hospital has had an immediate and positive impact, with results available to clinicians in minutes enabling treatment decisions to be made quickly.

The decision to install the HORIBA ABX haematology analyser at the specialist oncology unit was the result of delays when processing FBC/Diff test requests prior to chemotherapy treatment and during routine follow-up consultations. The highly

compact ABX Pentra 60C+ benchtop analyser is ideal for point-of-care use within oncology departments due to the 5-part cytochemical differential for white blood cells. This makes it particularly useful for monitoring patients receiving chemotherapy and follow-up care for various cancers.

"One of the great advantages of having installed the ABX Pentra 60C+ is the rapid and accurate processing of samples. As many of our patients are difficult to take full blood samples from, we can also run paediatric samples on the analyser,"

remarked the Oncology Phlebotomist at the Primrose Unit. "This not only reduces stress for the patient and clinician, but also prevents unnecessary sample re-runs and time wastage. Patients often remark with amazement on the 'instant results available' and this has been another great advantage to us."

For the full case study, please visit www.horiba-abx.com/uk/feedback

Anywhere

Rapid metabolic results at Oxford University

The ABX Pentra 400 benchtop clinical chemistry analyser is being well received in niche analysis areas, and 2007 saw a doubling of its user base, including scientists at Oxford University. The Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics at the University has found its new ABX Pentra 400 invaluable for cardiac metabolism research, enabling faster turnaround of results and facilitating the use of smaller sample sizes. Researching the role of diet and exercise on heart function, the team at Oxford University daily analyses plasma metabolite levels, lactate, triglycerides, ketones and fatty acids in blood.

"Installing the ABX Pentra 400 has enabled us to bring all our work on site where previously we were outsourcing costly assays to the NHS," explains Emma Carter, Laboratory Manager. In doing so, consistency and reliability is maintained across all research areas. "Florence, as our ABX Pentra 400 is known, has become invaluable to our research. Having the analyser has enabled rapid delivery of results, enabling researchers to continue working with the minimum of delay."

For the full case study, please visit www.horiba-abx.com/uk/feedback



Putting the new ABX Pentra 60C+ through its paces

Stress relief through POC

Haematology clinics at Torbay Hospital are now far less stressful for patients, consultants and laboratory staff alike, thanks to the arrival of an ABX Pentra 60C+ haematology analyser. Prior to the installation of the new point of care analyser, a 3-month audit had found that it took 48 minutes from patient bleed to results delivery on screen for consultants to view. This was due to sample transportation issues. By using the ABX Pentra 60C+ directly in clinics, turnaround time to results is now just 5 minutes, thereby significantly reducing waiting times and enabling busy haematology clinics to finish on time.

"Ronnie, as we affectionately call our ABX Pentra 60C+, has proved to be an

excellent stress reliever on clinic days, as we now have a win-win situation for all involved!" said Steve Giles, Laboratory Manager. "Lab staff no longer dread haematology clinics

and the ensuing sample backlog, and they even look forward to being on the rota to run Ronnie in clinic as a break from the routine. Our four consultant haematologists are also extremely happy, since they can now see their patients on time, meaning that waiting times are minimal and patients can also better plan their lives."

The successful arrival of the new point of care analyser is further verified by Dr Nichola Rymes, Haematology Consultant at Torbay, "Ronnie has made all the difference to our haematology clinics, and the patients love it. The only downside is that we can no longer blame the lab if the clinic ever falls behind!"

'Ronnie' the new ABX Pentra 60C+ POCT analyser working in Torbay with Julie Andrews (Specialist Biomedical Scientist).



For the full case study, please visit www.horiba-abx.com/uk/feedback

HORIBA ABX has recently extended its long standing relationship with Path Links by entering into a Managed Service Contract (MSC) for haematology services. Here Mick Chomyn, Path Links Haematology Directorate Manager, discusses with us the reasoning behind the decision and his thoughts on this increasingly popular approach to financing services in the NHS.

Mick Chomyn,
Path Links
Haematology
Directorate Manager



Path Links – Why a Managed Service Contract?

What was the motive for changing and how did you go about it?

Our introduction to Managed Service Contracts (MSC) came at the time of embarking on a major equipment replacement programme for haematology, clinical chemistry, immunoassay, and pre-analytical systems in 2006. Whilst we had not included the provision of an MSC as a mandatory requirement of the procurement process we were conscious of their growing emergence across the NHS and specifically, their successful application in pathology.

Diagnostic

What attracted you to a managed service contract?

Whilst having no direct experience at the time, several equipment suppliers put forward the proposal of an MSC as a framework to meet our future requirements; our attention being gained from a number of key factors:

Contractual

All aspects of the service provided including equipment purchase, installation, training, maintenance, upgrading and administration is covered and transferred to a third party supplier. Contractual obligations are well defined and subject to regular performance monitoring; these being linked to prescribed penalties for non-conformance or compliance.

Financial

Continuing to deliver high quality and responsive services against a backdrop of increasing demand and dwindling resources is probably the biggest challenge facing pathology services in the UK. An MSC better enables pathology services to avoid capital outlay, improve financial flows and provide opportunities for cost avoidance and, even better, savings. Under the terms of an MSC you pay a fixed rate for the services that you use and the opportunity to recover VAT.

Operational

The principal operational benefit from an MSC is toward 'future proofing' service provision. Particularly in pathology, where continuing rapid technological advancements may render equipment 'obsolete' during the term of a contract, the MSC provides opportunities for equipment 'refresh' should this arise. Since all aspects of the service are covered contractually, the supplier provides the guarantee of placing additional equipment necessary to meet future workload demands

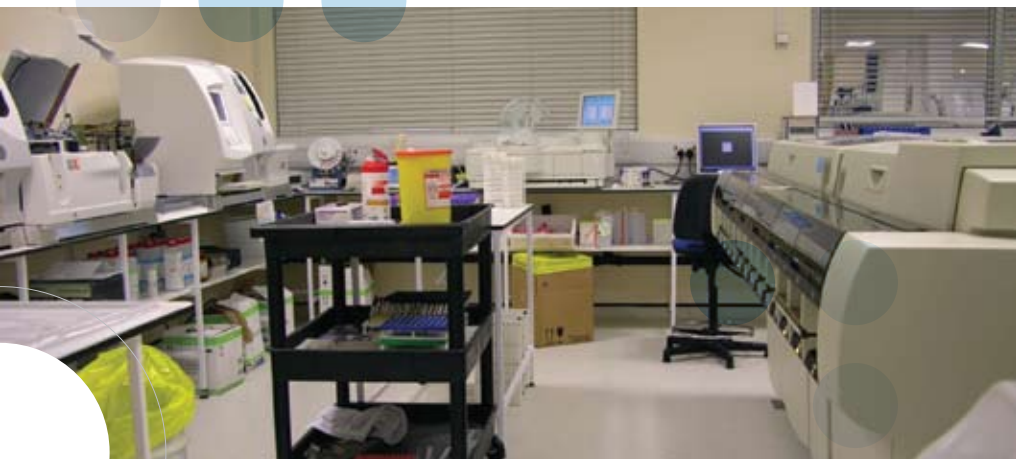
Mitigation of Risk

With an MSC, the cost and risk of ownership remains with the contractor thereby significantly reducing those risks and liabilities traditionally borne by the

pathology service. Whilst not exclusive, the following risks are mitigated:

- Risk associated with initial capital investment and unanticipated future requirements to meet service changes and rising demand
- Unforeseen maintenance and spare part costs
- New staff training costs
- Guarantees for uptime and equipment availability thereby minimising costs (financial and operational) associated with equipment downtime
- Guaranteed provision of services, reagents and consumables
- Failure to realise the maximum potential of the equipment offered in terms of utilisation, productivity and functionality





What is the scope of the new project?

From the initiation of Path Links as a single managed pathology service in 2001, it was always our intention to align our major equipment procurement cycles concurrently which occurred for the first time in 2006. For haematology, we were seeking to replace our ABX Pentra 120/120R analysers across our six laboratory sites and extend our requirements to include automated slide making and staining, and advanced data management.

Further, Path Links had already embarked on a 'Lean' implementation project supported by a US based consultancy, Argent Global Services, which incorporated the development of a single high volume 'capacity laboratory' as a strategy to meet continuing activity growth. The 'capacity laboratory', based at the Diana Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby, incorporates Lean work cells as the functional units of the Blood Sciences laboratory. As such, our analytical requirements were for flexible discrete systems in both haematology and chemistry as opposed to highly automated tracked systems.

Whilst both haematology and chemistry procurement cycles were aligned, we made the conscious decision not to link them into a single procurement to ensure that we had the choice of 'best of breed' in both disciplines together with the flexibility of achieving a 'best fit' for the proposed Lean work cells. Additionally, given the length of the contract award (7-10 years), it was vitally important to ensure that both the equipment and services offered by the successful vendor would meet our requirements over the full period of the contract.

Why did you decide to go with HORIBA ABX?

The Path Links decision to award the contract to HORIBA ABX as the preferred supplier for haematology systems was multi-factorial and the following decision criteria applied:

- Path Links had a long standing and successful relationship with HORIBA ABX with a proven track record of instrument reliability and service support.
- In meeting our requirements for developing Lean work cells, initially in the Grimsby laboratory and ultimately across all Path Links laboratories, HORIBA ABX provided the most robust solution in terms of instrument configuration, capacity and functionality.
- The requirement for additional analytical systems (eg slide making and staining) over and above our existing analytical base would inevitably add cost pressures to an already tight budget position. HORIBA ABX formulated a robust MSC package that fulfilled our analytical requirements and provided best value for money over the length of the contract.
- As the benefits of an MSC became apparent, HORIBA ABX were keen to engage with Path Links in developing a partnership arrangement to ensure long term service continuity and development as well as supporting ongoing Lean initiatives.

Are you satisfied with the results?

As both Path Links and HORIBA ABX are relative newcomers to MSC's we are still learning. The initial financial benefits are readily apparent in that we have a stable, predictable, and affordable financial framework for the next seven years. The transfer of risk associated with MSC's also means that we are 'future proofed' in terms of equipment availability, access to technological advances and flexibility and capacity to meet future changes in demand. The key element for long term success will be our joint ability to develop a responsive and mutually beneficial partnership.

Do you see use of a managed service contract as the way forward and are there any plans within the trust to extend their use to other areas?

Having firsthand experience of the benefits of an MSC we are proactively exploring its wider application across Path Links. The way in which the HORIBA ABX / Genmed Capital Management MSC was constructed allows Path Links to subsequently incorporate additional elements and we are initially looking at coagulation equipment and services, automated blood grouping equipment and services, and blood collection systems.

Dialogue

7th Haematology UGM

View from the Chairman – Steve Giles

As the new Chairman of the 2008 User Group Meeting (UGM), Steve Giles - Laboratory Manager at Torbay Hospital - reports on his role and the successful 2008 UGM held in Montpellier, the global HQ of HORIBA ABX. The role of the UGM Chairman starts well before the actual event by meeting up with the HORIBA ABX team to plan the focus and agenda, set the date, book hotel and conference venues and agree the all important hospitality! We select topics we believe users feel are most important and wish to discuss with their haematology specialist colleagues. At this point guest speakers and customers are invited to volunteer presentations, resulting in a never ending list of emails for the Chairman!

The immense task of planning flights to/from Montpellier could not be achieved without the support and hard work of the HORIBA ABX team, both in the UK and Montpellier. Montpellier is not the easiest place to get to from the UK, but with expert knowledge and planning, many users were able to travel from their regional airport.

The 2008 UGM ran very smoothly with the right mix of presentation topics, from point-of-care to Lean laboratory design. The feedback received reported that presentations on Functional Platelet Counts and those relating to point-of-care analysers 'in action' were particularly enjoyed.

As Chairman, I was particularly pleased there was no need to do any "arm-bending" to get customers to give presentations as it is not always easy to stand up at the front and talk to a large audience. My grateful thanks to Alan Hunt, St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey; Sandra Birdsall, University Hospital of Wales; Jackie Powell, Colchester General Hospital; Dr Afruj Ali Ruf, Airedale General Hospital; David Ricketts, North Middlesex Hospital; Professor Graham Smith, Frimley Park Hospital and Mick Chomyn of Path Links.



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Diary Date

Please come and visit us at the following events.

27-31 July, 2008

American Association for Clinical Chemistry's 2008 Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, www.aacc.org

2-4 September, 2008

BASES Annual Conference 2008, Brunel University, School of Sport and Education
www.brunel.ac.uk/about/acad/sse/bases

24-25 October, 2008

Society of Clinical Perfusion Scientists of GB & Ireland Congress in Perfusion & AGM 2008, Midland Hotel, Manchester, www.sopgbi.org/perfusionists.html



Managed Service Contracts Partnership

HORIBA ABX recently teamed up with managed services specialist Genmed Capital Management Limited to provide haematology systems as part of the Managed Service Contract (MSC) for Path Links and other ongoing tenders. Commenting on the growing relationship, Cleve Wright, UK Manager, HORIBA ABX said, "There is no doubt that managed service contracts (MSCs) are here to stay – trusts can obviously benefit from the risk transfer, guaranteed upgrades and VAT savings that the MSC offers. We have been looking for a contractual and financial services partner for a while now, since we believe that these contracts will continue to develop in sophistication and a partnership approach makes far more sense to both customer and vendor. Genmed's track record impressed us with their knowledge and experience in not just pathology but in other clinical disciplines".

NEW Products for laboratory automation

HORIBA ABX has launched two laboratory automation systems for pre- and post-analytical sample sorting and archiving - the ABX SAT RL 1500 pre-analytical robotic tube sorting device and the ABX SAT TA 5000+ refrigerated sample archiving system.

When combined, these solutions ensure optimal laboratory workflow and process efficiency through the use of universal barcode identification and robotic arm retrieval.



NEW service to help Quality Control Processes



HORIBA ABX will soon be launching its new service for pathology laboratories – The ABX Quality Control Program (QCP). The ABX QCP is an online Inter-Laboratory Comparison dedicated to all haematology and clinical chemistry analysers from HORIBA ABX. By submitting internal Quality Control results to the dedicated HORIBA ABX website, all member laboratories can obtain real time statistical reports and compare peer group results. The ABX QCP efficiently assists laboratories in their quality process and enables them to meet regulations to participate in Inter-Laboratory Comparison Surveys or Proficiency Testing (ISO/CEI 43-1 guide) for the analytical performance assessment of analysers.

For more product information, please send your request to info@uk.abx.fr noting the products of interest.