

## UK NEQAS for Virus identification - Scheme cancellation

Dear Participants and distributors.

### Re: Virus Identification EQA scheme

**We have had to make the unfortunate decision to withdraw the UK NEQAS for Virus identification scheme.**

This scheme was established as one of the first EQA schemes in UK NEQAS for Microbiology and the decision to withdraw the scheme was undertaken with great sadness.

The UK NEQAS for Virus identification scheme was introduced in 1971 to provide EQA for laboratories performing virus culture, immunofluorescence and eventually using molecular methods. This EQA has been focussing on respiratory viruses in the 'winter' distribution and measles, enteroviruses, CMV, HSV for the 'summer' distribution.

The interest in this scheme has declined over the years due to fewer laboratories undertaking culture and isolation. However, we felt it was important to keep this external quality assessment scheme going for educational purposes for as long as possible.

Alternative EQA schemes that laboratories (using molecular methods) can participate in are so that there are no gaps in your external quality assessment exercise are:

- Molecular detection of respiratory viruses includes an extended panel of respiratory viruses that can be tested by molecular methods, now include SARS-CoV-2.
- Molecular detection of viruses in CSF which includes detection of HSV, VZV and enteroviruses nucleic acid.

Please see link for further details: [Molecular EQA scheme information](#)

If you need any further assistance or advice please contact us via the organiser email: [organiser@ukneqasmicro.org.uk](mailto:organiser@ukneqasmicro.org.uk) and we will be happy to work with you to find a solution.

Thank you for your understanding and continuous support.

With best wishes

**Sanjiv**

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**Scheme Organiser for Virology and Molecular schemes.**