



Dear colleagues,

To give a regular update on the news from Eurotransplant Reference Laboratory, including information on External Proficiency Testing (EPT) and the Acceptable Mismatch (AM) Program, you will receive newsletters from us. In this first edition, information about changes in the EPT, the introduction of the vPRA and an announcement of the extra mural meeting 2016 can be found.

Changes in EPT and an update on the EPT crossmatch interpretation

Patient based EPT

From the beginning of 2016, the ETRL will introduce patient based cases to its EPT scheme. These are paper-based EPT exercises with the main aim to educate the laboratories and to discuss real-life examples of difficult cases at the annual extra mural meeting. All patient based cases will include general demographic information on a given patient and all relevant histocompatibility data of both kidney donor and recipient. The participating laboratory will be asked whether a transplant is advisable on immunological grounds. These patient based cases will be obligatory for all Eurotransplant affiliated laboratories and optional for all other laboratories.

This month we will start a pilot by sending one patient based case. Please read all the information carefully, decide on whether the patient should be transplanted with this donor and explain your decision. Send this information within two weeks to the ETRL office by e-mail (etrl@eurotransplant.org). For this pilot, it is recommended that all Eurotransplant affiliated laboratories perform the patient based exercise, for all other centers it is optional.

All centers are invited to send in their interesting patient cases to be used for the patient based EPT scheme. The form for submitting these data can be found on our website: <http://etrl.eurotransplant.org>.

Crossmatch interpretation

The Eurotransplant manual states that the final results of crossmatches should be decided on based on the results with unseparated cells or T cells. "The TTC must use CDC on unseparated cells or T cells for the allocation cross match with or without DTT as requested by the recipient center via the ET crossmatch list as or the local transplant center. The TTC can use additional techniques and include historical sera in the decisive cross match for local patients." (Eurotransplant manual, chapter 10, Histocompatibility Testing). Therefore, the final results of EPT on crossmatching

should be decided on based on CDC results from unseparated cells and/or T cells. From 2016 onwards, the ETRL will apply this rule when analyzing the EPT on crossmatching.

Virtual PRA

A reliable virtual PRA (vPRA) based on all the unacceptable mismatches of a patient will prevent the occurrence of unexpected positive crossmatches. This vPRA is calculated on the HLA type of ET donors from the last 5 years. Together with the blood group, this information is a reliable predictor of the chance of finding a compatible donor with the ET area. From the 1st of January 2016, the unacceptable antigens must be entered and will be the only tool to indicate that a patient is sensitized. The vPRA will be automatically calculated based on these unacceptable antigens.

The performance of the laboratories with respect to the definition of unacceptable mismatches in relation to the occurrence of unexpected positive crossmatches will be monitored closely by Eurotransplant.

Save the date: Extra Mural Meeting 2016

The next extra mural meeting will be held in Maastricht on Friday 26 February 2016, in "van der Valk Hotel Maastricht". More information will follow at the end of this year.

