

**S1 Table. Routine health service laboratory Standard Operating Procedures**

<i>Microscopy: Standards Unit, Microbiology Services Division, HPA Bacteriology   B 41   Issue no: 7.1   Issue date: 13.08.12</i>	Manual	Automated	Dipstix	
Number of laboratories using method	16	8	2*	
<i>Culture Method: Standards Unit, Microbiology Services Division, HPA Bacteriology   B 41   Issue no: 7.1   Issue date: 13.08.12</i>	Paper foot	Calibrated loop	Multipoint	
Number of laboratories using method	4	19	2	
<i>Culture Media: Standards Unit, Microbiology Services Division, HPA Bacteriology   B 41   Issue no: 7.1   Issue date: 13.08.12</i>	CLED	Chromogenic media	Both	
Number of laboratories using media	7	14	4	
<i>Calibrated loop culture volume: Standards Unit, Microbiology Services Division, HPA Bacteriology   B 41   Issue no: 7.1   Issue date: 13.08.12</i>	1uL	2uL	3uL	10uL
Number of laboratories using volume	11	5	2	1
<i>Calibrated loop culture volume: Standards Unit, Microbiology Services Division, HPA Bacteriology   B 41   Issue no: 7.1   Issue date: 13.08.12</i>	1/4	1/3	1/2	Whole
Number of laboratories using plate area	13	2	3	1

\* One laboratory uses Dipstix as well as manual microscopy

All participating laboratory methods were a variation on the Standard Microbiology Investigation (SMI) B41 guidelines. Based on 25 NHS laboratory Standard Operating procedures (SOPs) available.