

NHLS HIV-1 Viral Load Proficiency Testing Scheme

a) Factors that could influence the testing i.e. Nature of the PT items, conditions of storage

Temperature: Samples are shipped at ambient conditions. Store specimens at 2-30°C until day of testing. Do not use past expiration date on vial. Specimens must be at room temperature before opening vials. Each vial should be tested once and then discarded.

b) Sample Details

- 10 single use vials [two identical sets of 5 Dried Tube Specimens (DTS)]
- One tube (13 ml) reconstitution buffer.

c) Sample preparation and testing

- Add 1.1 ml reconstitution buffer to each DTS specimen and vortex for 10 seconds.
- Reconstituted specimens should be red in color, free of particulate matter and used immediately. If needed, the rehydrated specimens of DTS can be stored at 4°C for 24 hours or -20 °C or colder for up to one week, with no more than one freeze-thaw.
- Perform testing according to your laboratory's Standard Operating Procedure along with your patients' specimen into your daily workflow, so test results are truly indicative of your lab's daily performance.

d) Recording and submission of PTS Results.

- Print a response form from www.nhls.ac.za.
 - . Please note that Results must be reported in log₁₀ copies/ml

Results must be submitted online to the PTS Provider before the return deadline. Login details have been emailed to individual laboratories but the PT Coordinators can be contacted for more information.