

Case Study Darent Valley Hospital

Managing increasing workloads in haematology laboratories

It is becoming more and more important for laboratories to consider future growth when looking at their analyser requirements. With hospitals serving an ever increasing population, reliable analysers capable of processing larger workloads are an absolute necessity.

This case study discusses how the ABX Pentra DX 120 and ABX Pentra DF 120 SPS high-throughput analysers, with integrated slide preparation and the ABX ML Data Manager, enable better informed and reliable decision making.

"With HORIBA ABX we hope to have an analyser system set up that will last for the foreseeable future and cope with our ever increasing throughput, without the need for further staff recruitment"

Keith Holmes Haematology Laboratory Manager
Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust

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 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 decision to install the two HORIBA ABX analysers at the Darent Valley haematology laboratory came about as the previous supplier's systems reached the end of their life expectancy. Opened in September 2000, Darent Valley Hospital was the first entirely new hospital built as part of a Private Finance Initiative, with completely new state-of-the-art facilities throughout. After 7 years of intensive use to meet the analysis demand, the original analysers in the haematology laboratory needed replacing.

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 at Darent Valley Hospital 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."



Pauline Bigsby and Simon Jordan at Darent Valley Hospital with their new haematology system

With integrated slide preparation systems, the ABX Pentra 120 analysers have enabled the haematology laboratory to maintain their glass free work policy. Previously slides were prepared manually in batches, with a risk of slides breaking in the hands. However, now they are made easily "there and then" alongside the new analysers with minimal glass handling requirements. Parameters can also be set to make slides based on particular criteria, whilst the superior reflex capability allows immediate intelligent rules-based decisions on slide making.

Another benefit to the laboratory is the two new ABX Pentra ML Data Managers, providing a comprehensive look at patient results, including histograms and flags. "With the old system, data was transferred directly over to the Laboratory Information System, but now the new ABX Pentra ML software enables biomedical

scientists to make better informed decisions whilst still at the analyser, with previous test results and full patient history available for cross referencing," details Keith Holmes. "With such comprehensive data available on one screen, we can now maximise our use of our haematology analysers with subsequent clinical and patient benefits."

More than happy with the service received from HORIBA ABX, the haematology laboratory has utilised the training provided to overcome the initial learning curve expected when transitioning to a completely new analyser system with significant technology changes. Eager to help, HORIBA ABX provided the laboratory with in-house and external training coupled with easy to follow instruction guides. "Everything was new compared to the old systems, but HORIBA ABX gave us training in whatever we needed," explained Keith Holmes.

Analysis **Anywhere**

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