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Iechyd Cyhoeddus
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Public Health
Wales

Freedom of Information request to Public Health Wales

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| FOI Reference: | FOI 594 |
| Date request received | 8th January 2021 |
| Date information is due to be sent | 5th February 2021 |

Information Requested:

Please can you provide me with the following under a freedom of information request.

1. How many amplification cycles are being used in the PCR Testing for Covid 19 implemented by Public Health Wales.
2. Has the number of cycles changed in any way since the testing began, if so please can you confirm the amplification levels
3. What are the test manufacturing guidelines for the amplification levels that should be used to test for covid 19

Information provided for the answer:

Thank you for your recent request.

1.

The real-time PCR assays in use in Wales for COVID-19 diagnostics all run for 45 cycles however, the cycle number where the sample is defined as RNA NOT DETECTED varies by platform and target gene detected by the system. This is defined by the manufacturer. One platform (Hologic) is isothermal, this means it does not cycle through temperature changes in the same way as the real-time PCR systems, therefore CT values are not reported by this system.

2.

The number of cycles is determined by the different suppliers for each platform, and we are not aware that the number of cycles has changed through the course of the pandemic.

3

For multiplex respiratory assays we have validated and routinely use; Luminex NxTag RPP and BioMerieux Biofire.

The product Information Sheet and Safety Data Sheet is information which is in the public domain, for your convenience I attach links to the company websites below:-

<https://www.luminexcorp.com/eu/nxtag-respiratory-pathogen-panel/>

https://www.biomerieux.co.uk/search/apachesolr_search/biofire

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of the decision, you should write to the Corporate Complaints Manager, Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 3, Number 2, Capital Quarter, Tyndall Street, Cardiff, CF10 4BZ.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint or review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Trust. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner for Wales

2nd Floor
Churchill House
Churchill Way
Cardiff
CF10 2HH

Telephone: 029 2067 8400

Email: wales@ico.org.uk