

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000759

OUTCOME: 9 - Biosecurity and Emergency Response

Topic: Lyme Disease - Testing

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Madigan, John

Question:

The National Serology Reference Laboratory has been tasked with resolving the discordant results between overseas (e.g. IGeneX, Infectolab and ArminLabs) and domestic laboratories.

- a) Will the work by the National Serology Reference Laboratory lead to accreditation of overseas labs?
- b) If not, what is required to achieve such an outcome?
- c) There is urgent need to resolve discordant results to ensure the infection causing Lyme and Lyme-like disease is identified and treated promptly. What is the current status of the work by the National Serology Reference Laboratory and when will its findings be publically released?

Answer:

The National Serology Reference Laboratory (NRL) has been contracted to evaluate laboratory tests used in the serological diagnosis of Lyme disease. This project has no bearing on the medical testing accreditation of participating laboratories. Laboratory directors apply to their national competent authorities for medical testing accreditation.

The NRL project is commencing. Specimens are being collected. The results will be published in a peer reviewed medical journal.