

External Quality Assessment Scheme

Blood Culture, screening Round 1, 2023

Specimens

Please find enclosed 2 lyophilized samples S001 and S002, and vials of rehydration fluid, each 0.5 mL.

Caution

The specimens simulate patient samples and should be handled with the same care as patient samples, i.e., as potential transmitters of serious diseases.

Background information

Sample S001

A long-term ICU patient with cannula-related sepsis.

Sample S002

A 23-year-old male with severe wound infection.

Examinations

Blood culture, screening

Storage and use

After arrival, the samples should be stored at +2...8 °C.

1. Let the sample and the rehydration fluid warm up to room temperature.
2. Cut the foil packet open at the end where you can feel the thicker part of the loop.
3. Remove the plastic sheath from the loop. Break the loop shaft off from handle directly into the tube containing warm rehydration fluid (blue cap).
4. Incubate the tube for 30 minutes at +35...37 °C.
5. Check that the black film dissolves completely out of the loop. Mix well and discard the loop.
6. Measure 10 mL of blood (taken from a healthy person or animal) into a sterile tube. *
7. Add 10 µL of rehydrated bacterial sample to the blood. **
8. Mix well the content of the tube.
9. Divide the content of the tube into blood culture bottles: 5 mL in aerobic bottle and 5 mL in anaerobic bottle, or, if only one bottle is used (e.g. Oxoid Signal), add the whole content of the tube into this bottle.

Please note

* To minimize the risk of coagulation, the blood can alternatively be added directly into the blood culture bottles as follows: 5 mL in aerobic bottle and 5 mL in anaerobic bottle, or, if only one bottle is used (e.g. Oxoid Signal) 10 mL directly into the bottle.

** If the blood is added directly into the blood culture bottles proceed as follows: add 10 µL of bacterial sample into 500 µL of 0.9% NaCl, mix well and add 250 µL of this bacterial sample into each blood culture bottle, or if only one bottle is used, add all 500 µL into the bottle.

Incubate like patient samples.

Result reporting

Kindly report your results via LabScala (www.labscala.com). See short guidance for filling the e-form on next page.

2023-02-21

INSTRUCTIONS

Product no. 5101

LQ761823011-012/US

UN3373

Subcontracting: Sample pretesting

If the kit is incomplete or contains damaged specimens, please report immediately to info@labquality.fi.

The results should be reported no later than **March 17, 2023.**

The expected results of the round are published in LabScala in the View Reports section by March 21, 2023.

Inquiries

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First report in the *Test selection/ Growth medium and incubation period* section the type of laboratory you represent (clinical, or, other than clinical laboratory). Next choose the appropriate option in *Test selection*; if your standard operating procedure includes reporting a preliminary identification of the findings then choose: *We report a preliminary identification by gram stain and/or other identification tests*. The other option: *We report only possible growth (negative/positive)*, is intended for laboratories that do not report any preliminary identification of the findings. Note, that the drop-down menu that opens in the *Report to the clinician* section is depending on your test selection.

Next report the growth medium and the incubation period. Add each result by clicking the plus button at the end of row. Next fill in your *Report to the clinician* by choosing the appropriate options in *Finding* and *Further handling*. Other than clinical laboratories should consider section *Report to the clinician* equivalent to a final screening result, as they presumptively do not report results to clinicians. Note, that the species names included in the *Finding* selection have an additional marking “direct NAT”, which refers to that the identification has been performed directly from positive blood cultures by a nucleic acid detection test. If a laboratory identifies the findings by conventional methods from culture, then they should participate in the EQA for Blood Culture (product 5100).

Followingly, report the possible identification test results by gram staining and/or direct nucleic acid detection tests (NAT). Remember to add the NAT result by clicking the plus button at the end of row.

You may report multiple microbe findings by clicking the *Add finding* -button at the end of the blue bar with text *Microbe*.

Report to the clinician part will be scored merely.

Kindly contact the EQA Coordinator if you need assistance with filling the result form .

S001



S002

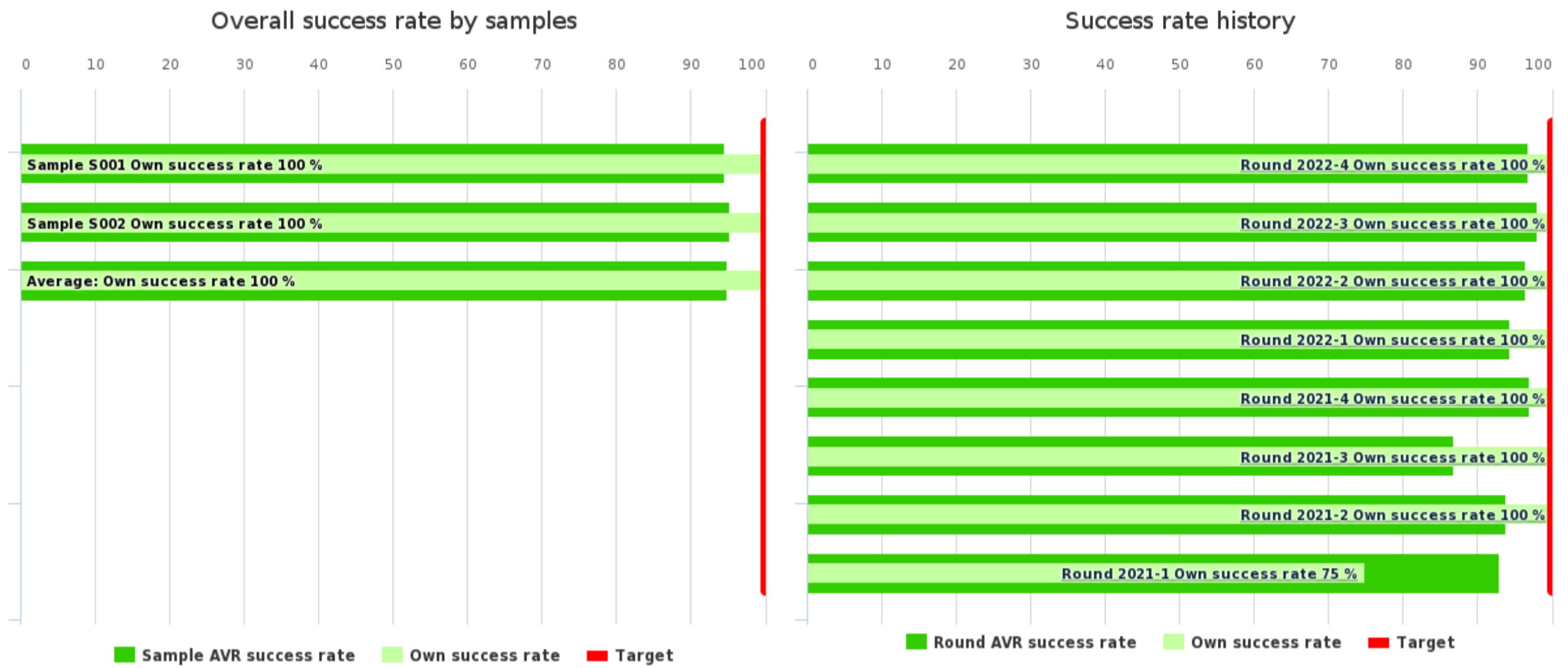


Client report

	No of participants	No of responded participants	Response percentage
Blood culture, screening, March, 1-2023	75	73	97.3 %

Summary

Blood culture, screening (5101)

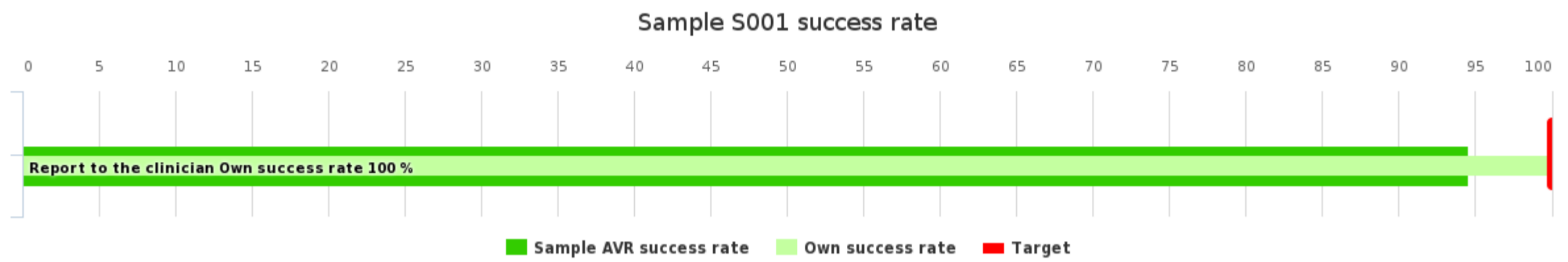


Summary	Own score	Max score	Own success rate	Difference	AVR success rate
Sample S001	4	4	100 %	5.4 %	94.6 %
Sample S002	4	4	100 %	4.7 %	95.3 %
Average:			100 %	5.1 %	94.9 %

History	Test nr.	Own success rate	Difference	AVR success rate
Round 2022-4	1	100 %	3.2 %	96.8 %
Round 2022-3	1	100 %	2 %	98 %
Round 2022-2	1	100 %	3.5 %	96.5 %
Round 2022-1	1	100 %	5.6 %	94.4 %
Round 2021-4	1	100 %	2.9 %	97.1 %
Round 2021-3	1	100 %	13.1 %	86.9 %
Round 2021-2	1	100 %	6.3 %	93.8 %
Round 2021-1	1	75 %	-18 %	93 %

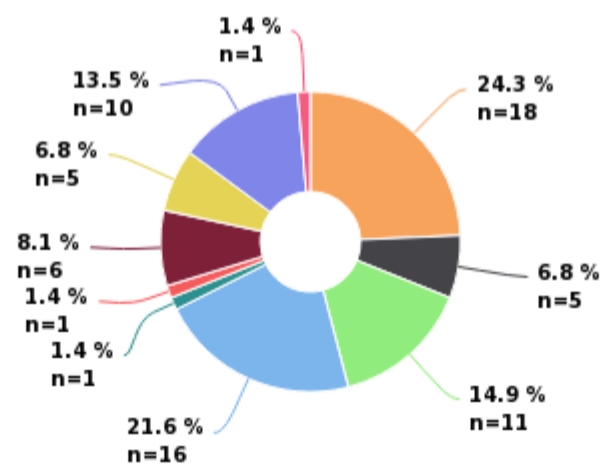
Sample S001 | Staphylococcus epidermidis

Blood culture, screening (5101)

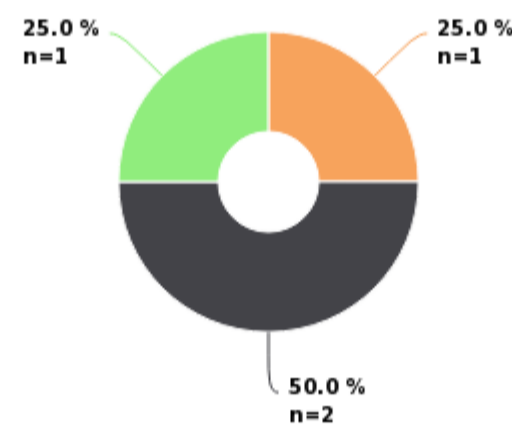


Sample S001 results	Responded	AVR success rate	Count
	Report to the clinician	94.6 %	78

Sample S001 Staphylococcus epidermidis



Sample S001 Additional finding



- Growth/Positive - identification is not reported
- Grampositive cocci
- Grampositive cocci in chains
- Aerobe grampositive cocci
- Staphylococcus epidermidis (direct NAT)
- No growth/Negative - identification is not reported
- Growth/Positive
- Grampositive cocci in clusters
- Gramnegative rod
- Aerobe grampositive cocci in clusters
- Grampositive cocci in chains
- Anaerobe grampositive cocci
- Anaerobe grampositive rod

LABORATORY SPECIFIC SCORING TABLE

Finding group	Finding	Further action	Own score	Max score	Own success rate	Difference	AVR success rate
Staphylococcus epidermidis	Grampositive cocci in clusters	Referred for further examination	4	4	100 %	5.4 %	94.6 %
Total:			4	4	100 %	5.4 %	94.6 %

REPORT TO THE CLINICIAN

Finding group	Finding	Finding count	Referred	Not referred	AVR success rate
Staphylococcus epidermidis		74			94.6 %
	Growth/Positive - identification is not reported	18	10	8	
	Growth/Positive	5	2	3	
	Grampositive cocci	11	11		
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	16	13	3	
	Grampositive cocci in chains	1		1	
	Gramnegative rod	1	1		
	Aerobe grampositive cocci	6	4	2	
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in clusters	5	2	3	
	Staphylococcus epidermidis (direct NAT)	10	8	2	
	No growth/Negative - identification is not reported	1		1	
Additional finding		4			-
	Grampositive cocci in chains	1	1		
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci	2	2		
	Anaerobe grampositive rod	1	1		

Total:		78		94.6 %
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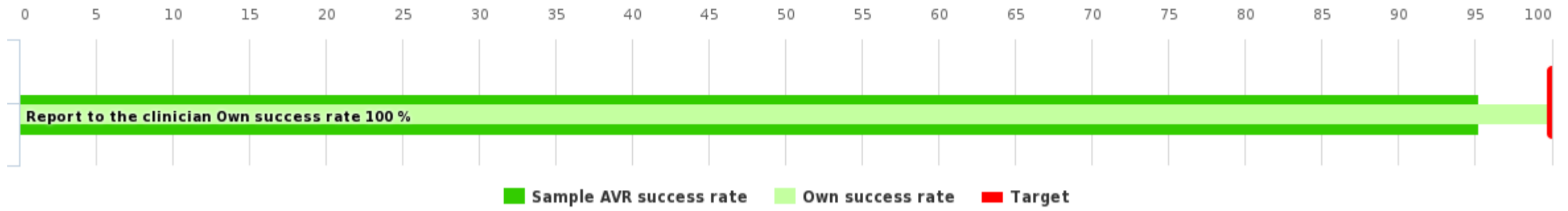
SCORING SUMMARY

Finding group	Finding	Finding score	Referred	Max score
Staphylococcus epidermidis				4
	Growth/Positive - identification is not reported	4		4
	Growth/Positive	2	1	4
	Grampositive cocci	4		4
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	4		4
	Grampositive cocci in chains	4		4
	Gramnegative rod	0		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci	4		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in clusters	4		4
	Staphylococcus epidermidis (direct NAT)	4		4
	No growth/Negative - identification is not reported	0		4
Additional finding				-
	Grampositive cocci in chains	-		-
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci	-		-
	Anaerobe grampositive rod	-		-
Total:				4

Sample S002 | Streptococcus pyogenes

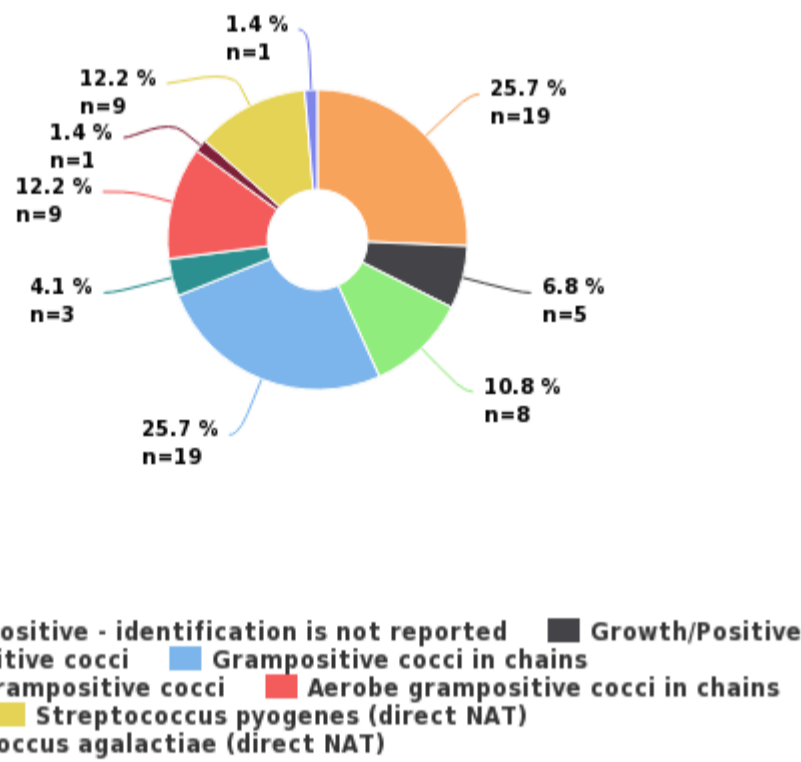
Blood culture, screening (5101)

Sample S002 success rate

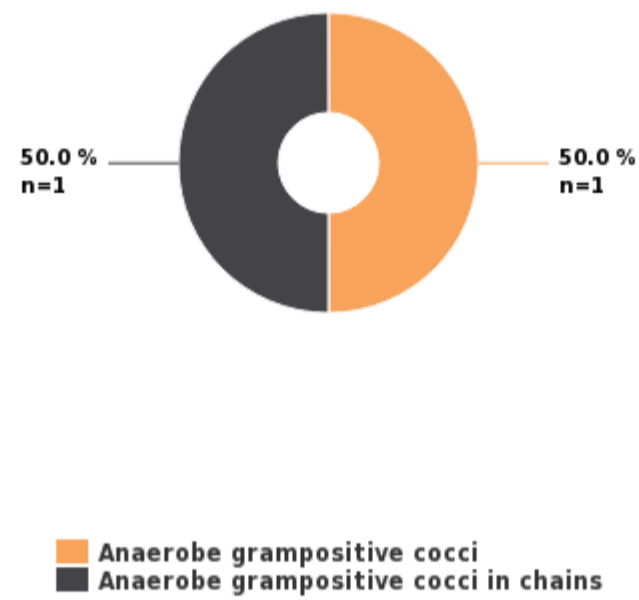


Sample S002 results	Responded	AVR success rate	Count
	Report to the clinician	95.3 %	76

Sample S002 Streptococcus pyogenes



Sample S002 Additional finding



LABORATORY SPECIFIC SCORING TABLE

Finding group	Finding	Further action	Own score	Max score	Own success rate	Difference	AVR success rate
Streptococcus pyogenes	Grampositive cocci in chains	Referred for further examination	4	4	100 %	4.7 %	95.3 %
Total:			4	4	100 %	4.7 %	95.3 %

REPORT TO THE CLINICIAN

Finding group	Finding	Finding count	Referred	Not referred	AVR success rate
Streptococcus pyogenes		74			95.3 %
	Growth/Positive - identification is not reported	19	11	8	
	Growth/Positive	5	2	3	
	Grampositive cocci	8	8		
	◉ Grampositive cocci in chains	19	◉ 15	4	
	Aerobe grampositive cocci	3	2	1	
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains	9	6	3	
	Yeast	1	1		
	Streptococcus pyogenes (direct NAT)	9	9		
	Streptococcus agalactiae (direct NAT)	1		1	
Additional finding		2			-
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci	1	1		
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci in chains	1	1		
Total:		76			95.3 %

SCORING SUMMARY

Finding group	Finding	Finding score	Referred	Max score
Streptococcus pyogenes				4
	Growth/Positive - identification is not reported	4		4
	Growth/Positive	2	1	4
	Grampositive cocci	4		4
	Grampositive cocci in chains	4		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci	4		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains	4		4
	Yeast	0		4
	Streptococcus pyogenes (direct NAT)	4		4
	Streptococcus agalactiae (direct NAT)	2		4
Additional finding				-
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci	-		-
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci in chains	-		-
Total:				4

Report Info**PARTICIPANTS**

Altogether 213 laboratories from 22 countries participated in this EQA round.

REPORT INFO

On the front page you can see summaries of overall success rate and sample specific success rates which have been calculated from the scores. The reported results and the scores are presented in the same report but in separate tables.

In general, the expected results are marked with green color. Accepted results may also be indicated with yellow color. Laboratory's own results are indicated with a black radio button . In the participant specific report there is also a laboratory specific scoring table for each sample, where you can find your own result and the scores given.

If you have not reported results you will get a note: "You have not responded in time, only global report is available".

For information on report interpretation and performance evaluation, please see the "EQAS Interpretation guidelines" in LabScala User instructions. In case you have any questions regarding the reports, please contact the EQA Coordinator.

SCORING

The results in the "Report to the clinician" part can be scored when at least 60% of the participants have reported the correct/expected result and when there are at least three reported results.

The report includes a sample specific scoring summary.

Laboratory's scores have been converted to percentage (own success rate, % from maximum scores) with a target at 100%. Own success rate is compared with the success rate of all results.

The following general rules are applied:

4 points is reached by reporting the expected result

1-3 points is given to results that are partly correct/insufficient regarding the expected finding

0 points is given for an incorrect/false result

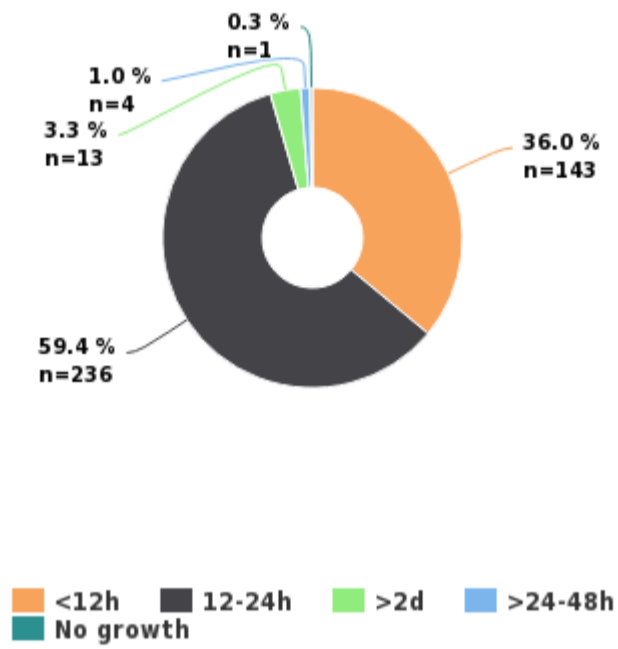
Client report

	No of participants	No of responded participants	Response percentage
Blood culture, March, 1-2023	138	135	97.8 %
Blood culture, screening, March, 1-2023	75	73	97.3 %

Sample S001 | Staphylococcus epidermidis

Sample S001 results	Responded	Count
	Growth medium and incubation period	397
	Gram staining	190
	Identification test kits and analyzers	36
	Identification tests: MALDI-TOF	111
	Identification tests: NAT and DNA-sequencing	21

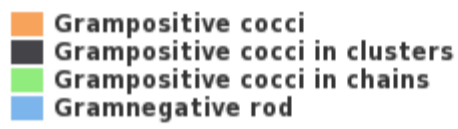
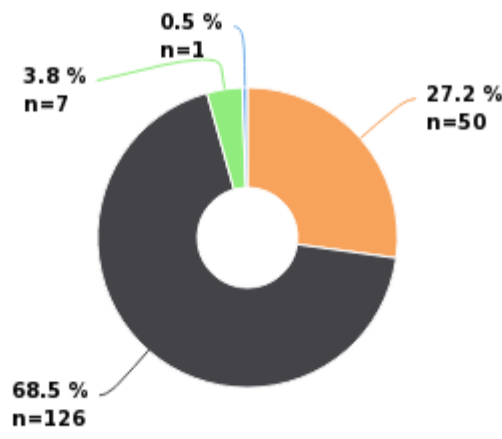
Sample S001 Growth medium and incubation period



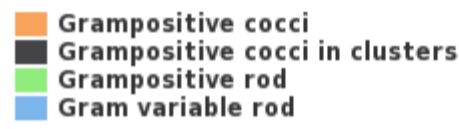
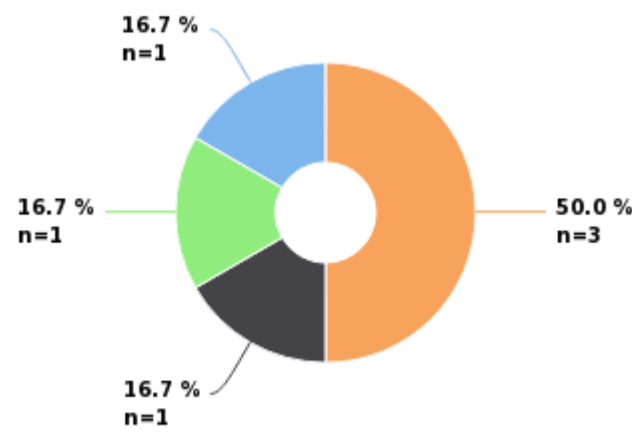
GROWTH MEDIUM AND INCUBATION PERIOD

Medium type	Growth medium	No growth	<12h	12-24h	>24-48h	>2d	Growth medium count
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Aerobic bottle							
	BacT/ALERT BPA bioMerieux		2	1			3
	BacT/ALERT FA bioMerieux		3	4			7
	BacT/ALERT FA plus bioMerieux		31	30	1	1	63
	BacT/ALERT PF bioMerieux		2	3			5
	BacT/ALERT SA bioMerieux		7	12		1	20
	BD Bactec Peds Plus/F Becton Dickinson		4	8		1	13
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> BD Bactec Plus Aerobic/F Becton Dickinson		20	57	1	3	81
	BD Bactec Standard/10 Aerobic/F Becton Dickinson	1	2	2			5
	VersaTREK Redoz 1EZ Thermo Scientific		1				1
Aerobic- and anaerobic bottle							
	Oxoid Signal Blood Culture System Thermo Scientific		3	14	1		18
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Anaerobic bottle							
	BacT/ALERT BPN bioMerieux		2				2
	BacT/ALERT FN bioMerieux		1	3			4
	BacT/ALERT FN plus bioMerieux		15	48	1	1	65
	BacT/ALERT SN bioMerieux		9	12		1	22
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> BD Bactec Lytic/10 Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		32	22		2	56
	BD Bactec Plus Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		6	18		3	27
	BD Bactec Standard/10 Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		3	2			5
Total:		1	143	236	4	13	397

Sample S001 Gram staining, Staphylococcus epidermidis



Sample S001 Gram staining, Additional finding



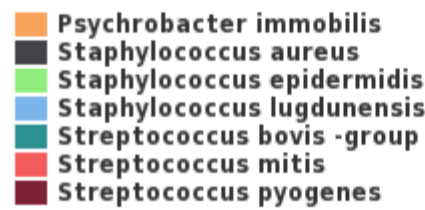
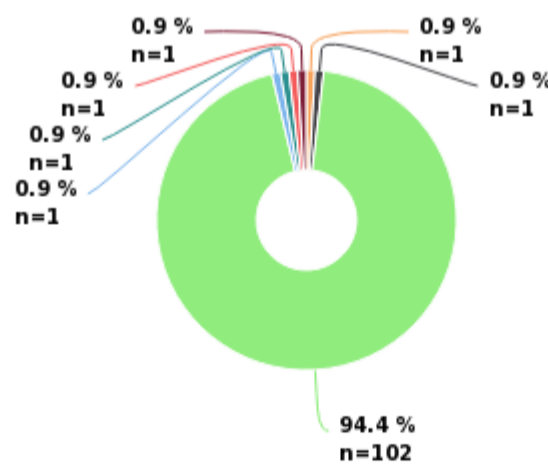
GRAM STAINING

Finding group	Result	Result count
Staphylococcus epidermidis		184
	Grampositive cocci	50
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Grampositive cocci in clusters	126
	Grampositive cocci in chains	7
	Gramnegative rod	1
Additional finding		6
	Grampositive cocci	3
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	1
	Grampositive rod	1
	Gram variable rod	1
Total:		190

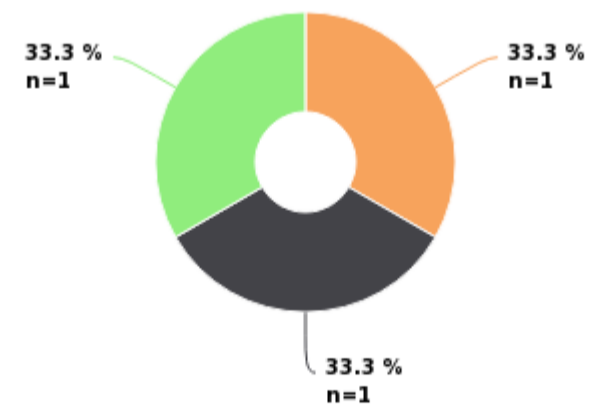
Sample S001 Identification test kits and analyzers, Staphylococcus epidermidis



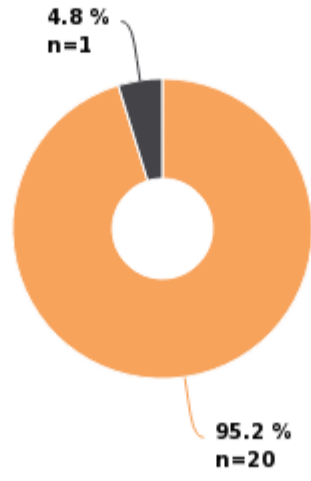
Sample S001 Identification tests: MALDI-TOF, Staphylococcus epidermidis



Sample S001 Identification tests: MALDI-TOF, Additional finding



Sample S001 Identification tests: NAT and DNA-sequencing, Staphylococcus epidermidis



■ Staphylococcus epidermidis
■ Streptococcus pyogenes

IDENTIFICATION TEST KITS AND ANALYZERS

Finding group	Method	Result	Profile number	Profile number count	
Staphylococcus epidermidis	MicroScan Walk-Away (Beckman Coulter)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	N/A	2	
	VITEK 2 (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	0704000076721231	1	
			110000076621211	1	
			070400076621211	2	
			030400076621231	3	
			030400076621211	2	
			020400074620211	1	
			020000074621211	1	
			010400074621211	1	
			010000056220211	1	
			01040054620211	1	
			GP2422277103351648	1	
			GP	1	
			N/A	8	
			Streptococcus pyogenes	N/A	1
		VITEK 2 Compact 15 (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	030400076621211	1
				030000076621211	1
				000400074620211	1
		VITEK 2 Compact 30 (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	030400076621231	1
				030400076621211	1
			030400074620211	1	
			000400074621211	1	
			N/A	2	
Total:				36	

IDENTIFICATION TESTS: MALDI-TOF

Finding group	Method	Result	Score / Probability %	Score / Probability % count	
Staphylococcus epidermidis	Autof MALDI-ToF (Chirus)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	9.5..10	1	
	MALDI Biotyper (Bruker)	Psychrobacter immobilis	≥1.7..<2	1	
		Staphylococcus aureus	≥2	1	
		Staphylococcus epidermidis	≥2	61	
			≥1.7..<2	5	
			N/A	1	
		Streptococcus bovis -group	≥2	1	
		Streptococcus mitis	≥2	1	
		VITEK MS (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	99,9 %	28
				99 %	2
				91,4 %	1
				N/A	3
			Staphylococcus lugdunensis	99,9 %	1

		Streptococcus pyogenes	99,9 %	1
Additional finding	MALDI Biotyper (Bruker)	Bacillus sp.	≥1.7..<2	1
		Staphylococcus epidermidis	≥2	1
		Staphylococcus warneri	≥2	1
Total:				111

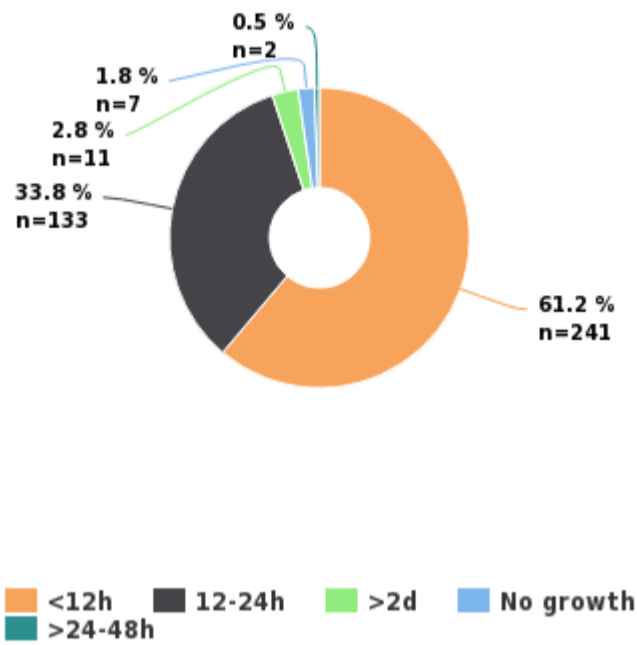
IDENTIFICATION TESTS: NAT AND DNA-SEQUENCING

Finding group	Method	Result	Result count
Staphylococcus epidermidis	BioFire Filmarray BCID2 Panel (bioMerieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	16
		Streptococcus pyogenes	1
	ePlex BCID-GP Panel (GenMark)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	3
	NAT, In house	Staphylococcus epidermidis	1
Total:			21

Sample S002 | Streptococcus pyogenes

Sample S002 results	Responded	Count
	Growth medium and incubation period	394
	Gram staining	188
	Identification test kits and analyzers	32
	Identification tests: MALDI-TOF	103
	Identification tests: NAT and DNA-sequencing	23

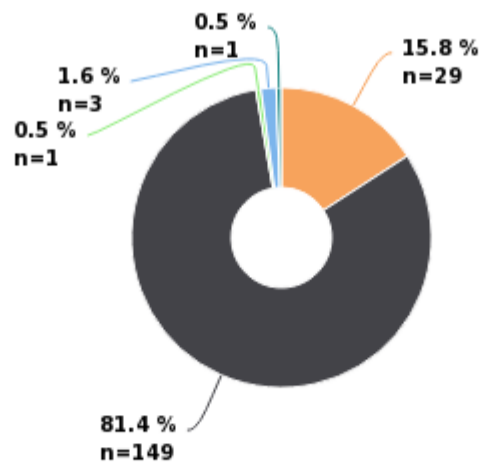
Sample S002 Growth medium and incubation period



GROWTH MEDIUM AND INCUBATION PERIOD

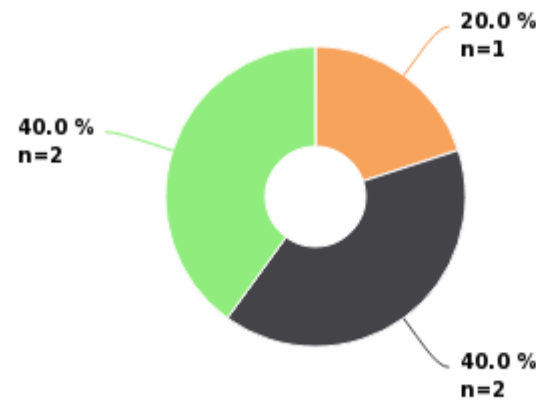
Medium type	Growth medium	No growth	<12h	12-24h	>24-48h	>2d	Growth medium count
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Aerobic bottle							
	BacT/ALERT BPA bioMerieux		3				3
	BacT/ALERT FA bioMerieux		4	4			8
	BacT/ALERT FA plus bioMerieux	1	39	23	1		64
	BacT/ALERT PF bioMerieux		2	2			4
	BacT/ALERT SA bioMerieux	1	8	9		1	19
	BD Bactec Peds Plus/F Becton Dickinson		8	4		1	13
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> BD Bactec Plus Aerobic/F Becton Dickinson	2	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 59	17		3	81
	BD Bactec Standard/10 Aerobic/F Becton Dickinson		3	2			5
	VersaTREK Redoz 1EZ Thermo Scientific		1				1
Aerobic- and anaerobic bottle							
	Oxoid Signal Blood Culture System Thermo Scientific		5	12		1	18
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Anaerobic bottle							
	BacT/ALERT BPN bioMerieux		2				2
	BacT/ALERT FN bioMerieux		1	3			4
	BacT/ALERT FN plus bioMerieux		33	31	1		65
	BacT/ALERT SN bioMerieux	1	12	7		1	21
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> BD Bactec Lytic/10 Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		<input checked="" type="radio"/> 43	8		2	53
	BD Bactec Plus Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson	2	17	10		2	31
	BD Bactec Standard/10 Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		1	1			2
Total:		7	241	133	2	11	394

Sample S002 Gram staining, Streptococcus pyogenes



- Grampositive cocci
- Grampositive cocci in chains
- Grampositive cocci in clusters
- Grampositive diplococci
- Yeast

Sample S002 Gram staining, Additional finding



- Grampositive cocci
- Grampositive cocci in chains
- Grampositive cocci in clusters

GRAM STAINING

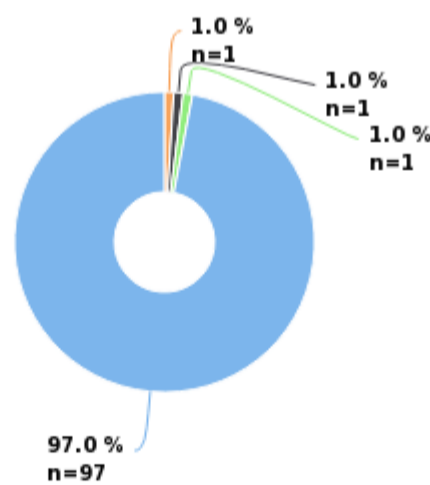
Finding group	Result	Result count
Streptococcus pyogenes		183
	Grampositive cocci	29
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Grampositive cocci in chains	149
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	1
	Grampositive diplococci	3
	Yeast	1
Additional finding		5
	Grampositive cocci	1
	Grampositive cocci in chains	2
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	2
Total:		188

Sample S002 Identification test kits and analyzers, Streptococcus pyogenes



- Streptococcus pyogenes
- Streptococcus sp., beta-hemolytic, Group A

Sample S002 Identification tests: MALDI-TOF, Streptococcus pyogenes



- Staphylococcus epidermidis
- Streptococcus agalactiae (Group B)
- Streptococcus pneumoniae
- Streptococcus pyogenes

Sample S002 Identification tests: MALDI-TOF, Additional finding



- Staphylococcus aureus
- Streptococcus pyogenes

Sample S002 Identification tests: NAT and DNA-sequencing, Streptococcus pyogenes



■ Staphylococcus epidermidis
■ Streptococcus pyogenes

IDENTIFICATION TEST KITS AND ANALYZERS

Finding group	Method	Result	Profile number	Profile number count		
Streptococcus pyogenes	BBL Crystal Gram-Positive ID Kit (Becton Dickinson)	Streptococcus pyogenes	N/A	1		
	MicroScan Walk-Away (Beckman Coulter)	Streptococcus pyogenes	N/A	2		
	RapID STR (Thermo Scientific)	Streptococcus sp., beta-hemolytic, Group A	N/A	1		
	VITEK 2 (bioMérieux)	Streptococcus pyogenes	051412364713671	1		
			051412364713271	1		
			051412360713271	1		
			051412360313671	1		
			051412360311671	1		
			051412360311471	1		
			051412344313071	1		
			051412304313031	1		
			051412300311271	2		
			011412364313671	1		
			011412364313271	1		
			011412324211031	1		
			GP	1		
			GP 2422277103351703	1		
			N/A	5		
			Streptococcus sp., beta-hemolytic, Group A	N/A	1	
			VITEK 2 Compact 15 (bioMérieux)	Streptococcus pyogenes	051412324313271	1
					1514123443431	1
VITEK 2 Compact 30 (bioMérieux)			Streptococcus pyogenes	051412364313271	1	
	051412320313271	1				
	011412364311071	1				
	N/A	2				
Total:				32		

IDENTIFICATION TESTS: MALDI-TOF

Finding group	Method	Result	Score / Probability %	Score / Probability % count
Streptococcus pyogenes	MALDI Biotyper (Bruker)	Streptococcus agalactiae (Group B)	≥2	1
		Streptococcus pyogenes	≥2	64
			≥1.7..<2	1
			N/A	1
	VITEK MS (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	99,9 %	1
		Streptococcus pneumoniae	99,9 %	1
		Streptococcus pyogenes	99,9 %	27
		99 %	1	
		N/A	3	
Additional finding	MALDI Biotyper (Bruker)	Staphylococcus aureus	≥2	2

		Streptococcus pyogenes	≥2	1
Total:				103

IDENTIFICATION TESTS: NAT AND DNA-SEQUENCING

Finding group	Method	Result	Result count
Streptococcus pyogenes	BioFire Filmarray BCID2 Panel (bioMerieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	2
		Streptococcus pyogenes	16
	ePlex BCID-GP Panel (GenMark)	Streptococcus pyogenes	3
		NAT, In house	Streptococcus pyogenes
Total:			23

GLOBAL REPORT

	No of participants	No of responded participants	Response percentage
Blood culture, March, 1-2023	138	135	97.8 %
Blood culture, screening, March, 1-2023	75	73	97.3 %

Summary

Blood culture (5100)

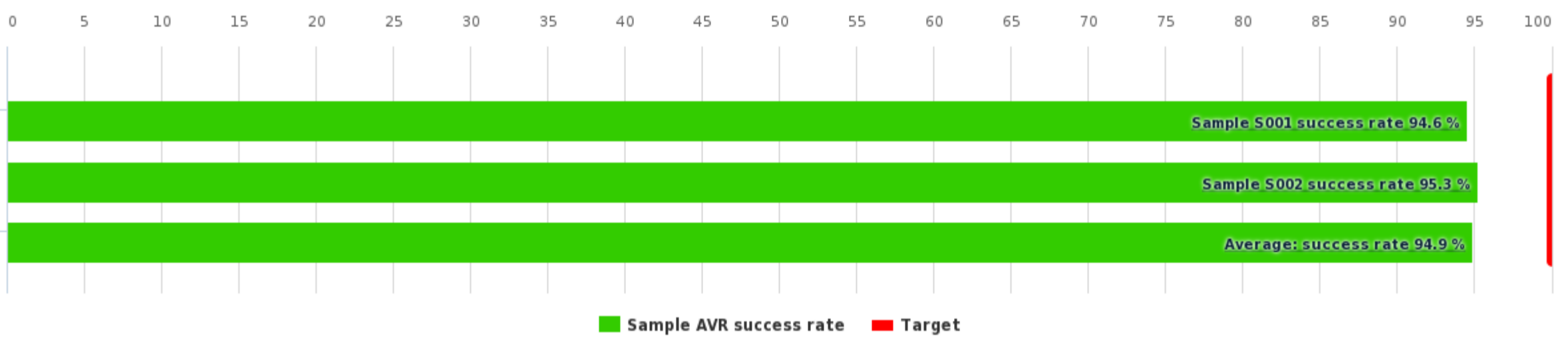
Overall success rate by samples



Summary	AVR success rate
Sample S001	94.3 %
Sample S002	94.8 %
Average:	94.5 %

Blood culture, screening (5101)

Overall success rate by samples

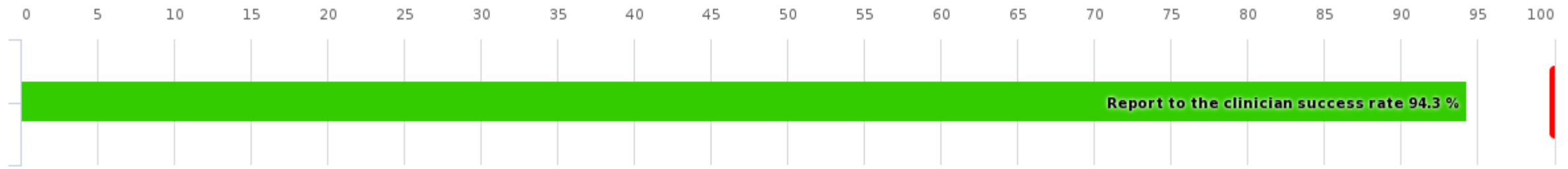


Summary	AVR success rate
Sample S001	94.6 %
Sample S002	95.3 %
Average:	94.9 %

Sample S001 | Staphylococcus epidermidis

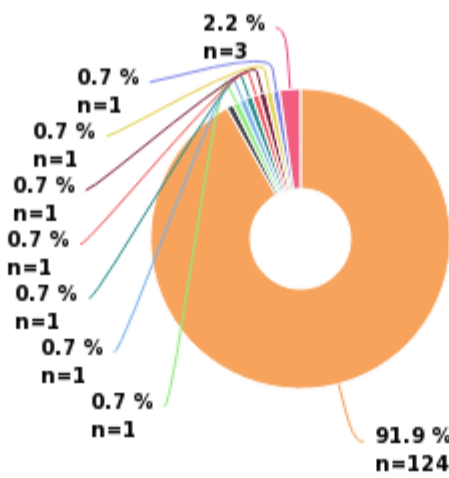
Blood culture (5100)

Sample S001 success rate



Sample S001 results	Responded	AVR success rate	Count
	Report to the clinician	94.3 %	139

Sample S001 Staphylococcus epidermidis



Sample S001 Additional finding



- Staphylococcus epidermidis
- Staphylococcus sp., coagulase negative
- Staphylococcus sp.
- Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains
- Staphylococcus lugdunensis
- Staphylococcus haemolyticus
- Staphylococcus aureus
- Streptococcus bovis -group
- Streptococcus viridans -group
- Streptococcus pyogenes

- Staphylococcus epidermidis
- Staphylococcus warneri
- Bacillus sp.

REPORT TO THE CLINICIAN

Finding group	Finding	Finding count	Referred	Not referred	AVR success rate
Staphylococcus epidermidis		135			94.3 %
	Staphylococcus epidermidis	124	28	96	
	Staphylococcus sp., coagulase negative	1		1	
	Staphylococcus sp.	1	1		
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains	1	1		
	Staphylococcus lugdunensis	1		1	
	Staphylococcus haemolyticus	1		1	
	Staphylococcus aureus	1		1	
	Streptococcus bovis -group	1		1	
	Streptococcus viridans -group	1		1	
	Streptococcus pyogenes	3	1	2	
Additional finding		4			-
	Staphylococcus epidermidis	2		2	
	Staphylococcus warneri	1		1	
	Bacillus sp.	1		1	
Total:		139			94.3 %

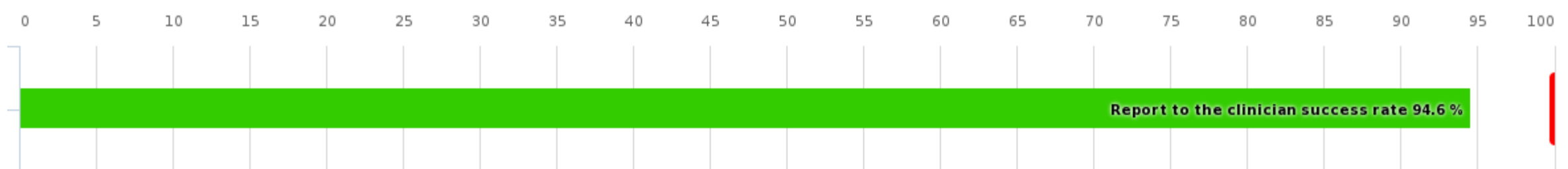
SCORING SUMMARY

Finding group	Finding	Finding score	Referred	Max score
Staphylococcus epidermidis				4
	Staphylococcus epidermidis	4		4

	Staphylococcus sp., coagulase negative	2		4
	Staphylococcus sp.	2	1	4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains	1	1	4
	Staphylococcus lugdunensis	2		4
	Staphylococcus haemolyticus	2		4
	Staphylococcus aureus	2		4
	Streptococcus bovis -group	0		4
	Streptococcus viridans -group	0		4
	Streptococcus pyogenes	0		4
Additional finding				-
	Staphylococcus epidermidis	-		-
	Staphylococcus warneri	-		-
	Bacillus sp.	-		-
Total:				4

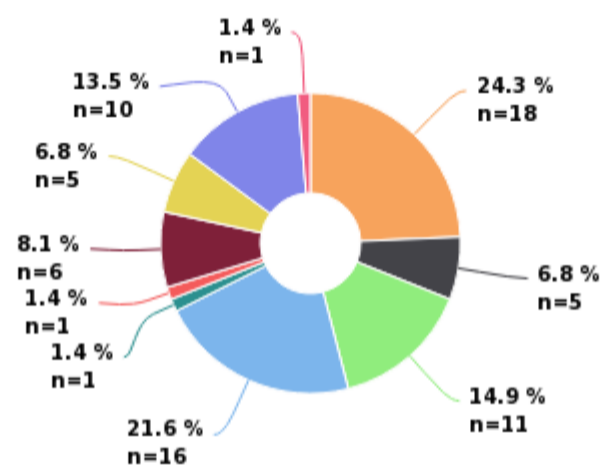
Blood culture, screening (5101)

Sample S001 success rate

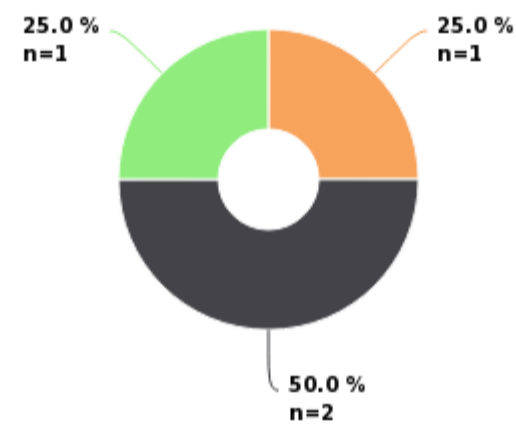


Sample S001 results	Responded	AVR success rate	Count
	Report to the clinician	94.6 %	78

Sample S001 Staphylococcus epidermidis



Sample S001 Additional finding



- Growth/Positive - identification is not reported
- Grampositive cocci
- Grampositive cocci in clusters
- Grampositive cocci in chains
- Gramnegative rod
- Aerobe grampositive cocci
- Aerobe grampositive cocci in clusters
- Staphylococcus epidermidis (direct NAT)
- No growth/Negative - identification is not reported
- Growth/Positive
- Anaerobe grampositive cocci
- Anaerobe grampositive rod

REPORT TO THE CLINICIAN

Finding group	Finding	Finding count	Referred	Not referred	AVR success rate
Staphylococcus epidermidis		74			94.6 %
	Growth/Positive - identification is not reported	18	10	8	
	Growth/Positive	5	2	3	
	Grampositive cocci	11	11		
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	16	13	3	
	Grampositive cocci in chains	1		1	
	Gramnegative rod	1	1		
	Aerobe grampositive cocci	6	4	2	
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in clusters	5	2	3	

	Staphylococcus epidermidis (direct NAT)	10	8	2	
	No growth/Negative - identification is not reported	1		1	
Additional finding		4			-
	Grampositive cocci in chains	1	1		
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci	2	2		
	Anaerobe grampositive rod	1	1		
Total:		78			94.6 %

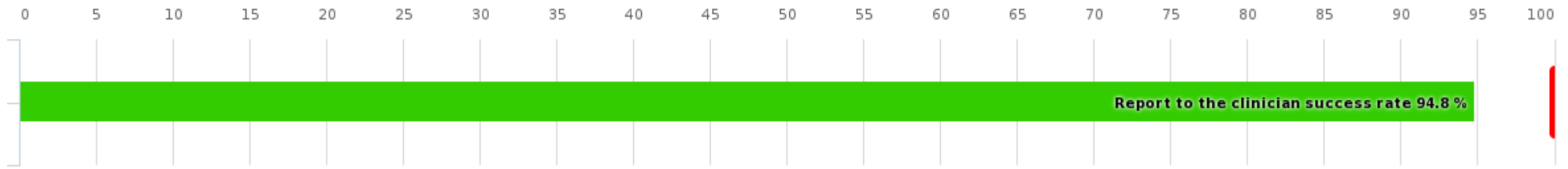
SCORING SUMMARY

Finding group	Finding	Finding score	Referred	Max score
Staphylococcus epidermidis				4
	Growth/Positive - identification is not reported	4		4
	Growth/Positive	2	1	4
	Grampositive cocci	4		4
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	4		4
	Grampositive cocci in chains	4		4
	Gramnegative rod	0		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci	4		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in clusters	4		4
	Staphylococcus epidermidis (direct NAT)	4		4
	No growth/Negative - identification is not reported	0		4
Additional finding				-
	Grampositive cocci in chains	-		-
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci	-		-
	Anaerobe grampositive rod	-		-
Total:				4

Sample S002 | Streptococcus pyogenes

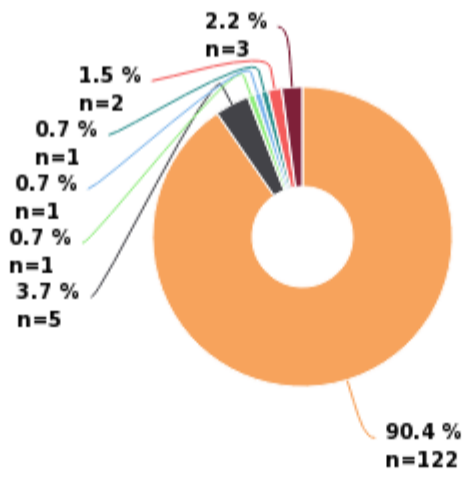
Blood culture (5100)

Sample S002 success rate



Sample S002 results	Responded	AVR success rate	Count
	Report to the clinician	94.8 %	138

Sample S002 Streptococcus pyogenes



Sample S002 Additional finding



- Streptococcus pyogenes
- Streptococcus sp., beta-hemolytic, Group A
- Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains
- Streptococcus agalactiae (Group B)
- Streptococcus pneumoniae
- Staphylococcus epidermidis
- No growth/Negative

- Streptococcus pyogenes
- Staphylococcus aureus

REPORT TO THE CLINICIAN

Finding group	Finding	Finding count	Referred	Not referred	AVR success rate
Streptococcus pyogenes		135			94.8 %
	Streptococcus pyogenes	122	59	63	
	Streptococcus sp., beta-hemolytic, Group A	5	2	3	
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains	1	1		
	Streptococcus agalactiae (Group B)	1		1	
	Streptococcus pneumoniae	1		1	
	Staphylococcus epidermidis	2	1	1	
	No growth/Negative	3		3	
Additional finding		3			-
	Streptococcus pyogenes	1	1		
	Staphylococcus aureus	2	1	1	
Total:		138			94.8 %

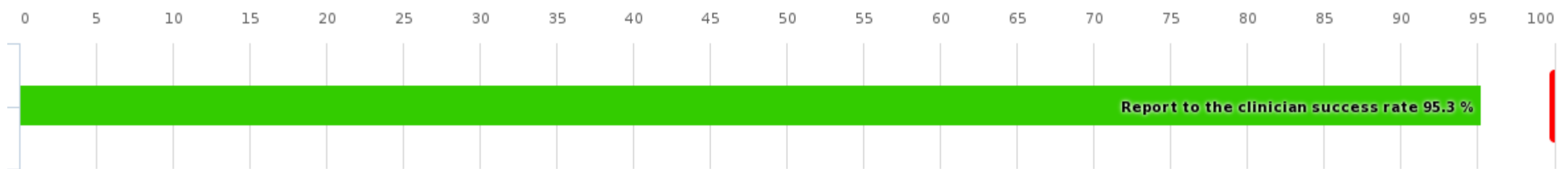
SCORING SUMMARY

Finding group	Finding	Finding score	Referred	Max score
Streptococcus pyogenes				4
	Streptococcus pyogenes	4		4
	Streptococcus sp., beta-hemolytic, Group A	4		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains	1	1	4
	Streptococcus agalactiae (Group B)	2		4
	Streptococcus pneumoniae	0		4
	Staphylococcus epidermidis	0		4
	No growth/Negative	0		4

Additional finding				-
	Streptococcus pyogenes	-		-
	Staphylococcus aureus	-		-
Total:				4

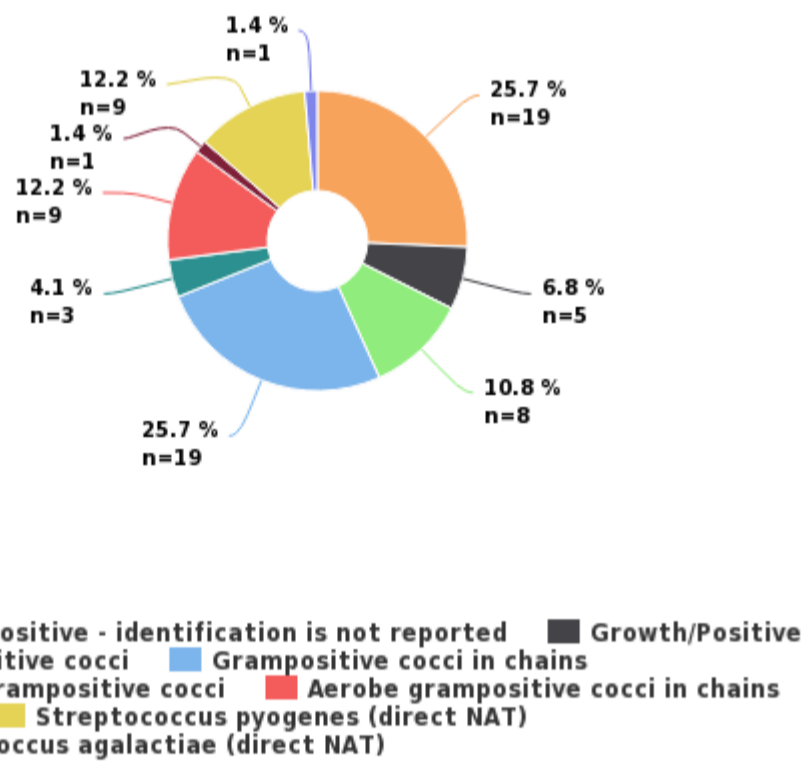
Blood culture, screening (5101)

Sample S002 success rate

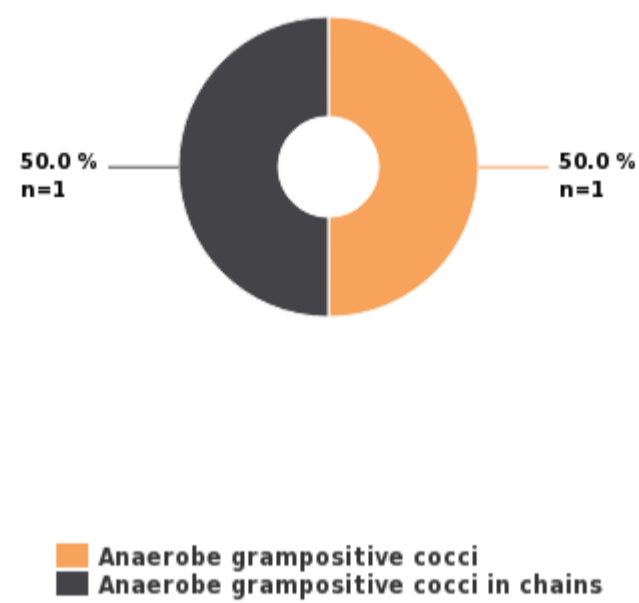


Sample S002 results	Responded	AVR success rate	Count
	Report to the clinician	95.3 %	76

Sample S002 Streptococcus pyogenes



Sample S002 Additional finding



REPORT TO THE CLINICIAN

Finding group	Finding	Finding count	Referred	Not referred	AVR success rate
Streptococcus pyogenes		74			95.3 %
	Growth/Positive - identification is not reported	19	11	8	
	Growth/Positive	5	2	3	
	Grampositive cocci	8	8		
	Grampositive cocci in chains	19	15	4	
	Aerobe grampositive cocci	3	2	1	
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains	9	6	3	
	Yeast	1	1		
	Streptococcus pyogenes (direct NAT)	9	9		
	Streptococcus agalactiae (direct NAT)	1		1	
Additional finding		2			-
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci	1	1		
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci in chains	1	1		
Total:		76			95.3 %

SCORING SUMMARY

Finding group	Finding	Finding score	Referred	Max score
Streptococcus pyogenes				4
	Growth/Positive - identification is not reported	4		4
	Growth/Positive	2	1	4

	Grampositive cocci	4		4
	Grampositive cocci in chains	4		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci	4		4
	Aerobe grampositive cocci in chains	4		4
	Yeast	0		4
	Streptococcus pyogenes (direct NAT)	4		4
	Streptococcus agalactiae (direct NAT)	2		4
Additional finding				-
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci	-		-
	Anaerobe grampositive cocci in chains	-		-
Total:				4

Report Info**PARTICIPANTS**

Altogether 213 laboratories from 22 countries participated in this EQA round.

REPORT INFO

On the front page you can see summaries of overall success rate and sample specific success rates which have been calculated from the scores. The reported results and the scores are presented in the same report but in separate tables.

In general, the expected results are marked with green color. Accepted results may also be indicated with yellow color. Laboratory's own results are indicated with a black radio button . In the participant specific report there is also a laboratory specific scoring table for each sample, where you can find your own result and the scores given.

If you have not reported results you will get a note: "You have not responded in time, only global report is available".

For information on report interpretation and performance evaluation, please see the "EQAS Interpretation guidelines" in LabScala User instructions. In case you have any questions regarding the reports, please contact the EQA Coordinator.

SCORING

The results in the "Report to the clinician" part can be scored when at least 60% of the participants have reported the correct/expected result and when there are at least three reported results. The report includes a sample specific scoring summary.

Laboratory's scores have been converted to percentage (own success rate, % from maximum scores) with a target at 100%. Own success rate is compared with the success rate of all results.

The following general rules are applied:

4 points is reached by reporting the expected result

1-3 points is given to results that are partly correct/insufficient regarding the expected finding

0 points is given for an incorrect/false result

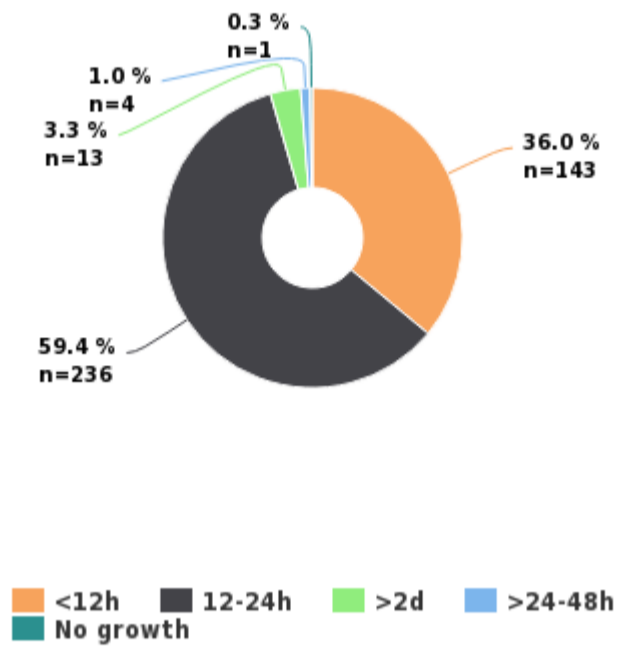
GLOBAL REPORT

	No of participants	No of responded participants	Response percentage
Blood culture, March, 1-2023	138	135	97.8 %
Blood culture, screening, March, 1-2023	75	73	97.3 %

Sample S001 | Staphylococcus epidermidis

Sample S001 results	Responded	Count
	Growth medium and incubation period	397
	Gram staining	190
	Identification test kits and analyzers	36
	Identification tests: MALDI-TOF	111
	Identification tests: NAT and DNA-sequencing	21

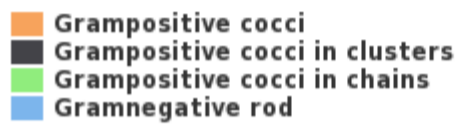
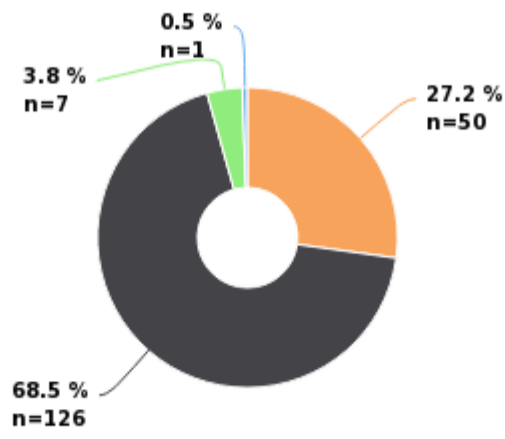
Sample S001 Growth medium and incubation period



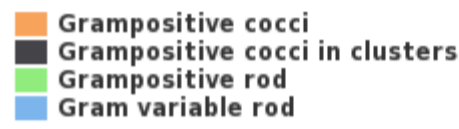
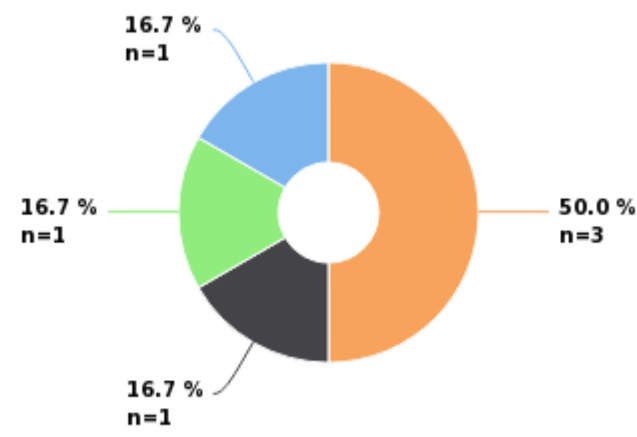
GROWTH MEDIUM AND INCUBATION PERIOD

Medium type	Growth medium	No growth	<12h	12-24h	>24-48h	>2d	Growth medium count
Aerobic bottle	BacT/ALERT BPA bioMerieux		2	1			3
	BacT/ALERT FA bioMerieux		3	4			7
	BacT/ALERT FA plus bioMerieux		31	30	1	1	63
	BacT/ALERT PF bioMerieux		2	3			5
	BacT/ALERT SA bioMerieux		7	12		1	20
	BD Bactec Peds Plus/F Becton Dickinson		4	8		1	13
	BD Bactec Plus Aerobic/F Becton Dickinson		20	57	1	3	81
	BD Bactec Standard/10 Aerobic/F Becton Dickinson	1	2	2			5
	VersaTREK Redoz 1EZ Thermo Scientific		1				1
Aerobic- and anaerobic bottle	Oxoid Signal Blood Culture System Thermo Scientific		3	14	1		18
Anaerobic bottle	BacT/ALERT BPN bioMerieux		2				2
	BacT/ALERT FN bioMerieux		1	3			4
	BacT/ALERT FN plus bioMerieux		15	48	1	1	65
	BacT/ALERT SN bioMerieux		9	12		1	22
	BD Bactec Lytic/10 Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		32	22		2	56
	BD Bactec Plus Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		6	18		3	27
	BD Bactec Standard/10 Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		3	2			5
Total:		1	143	236	4	13	397

Sample S001 Gram staining, Staphylococcus epidermidis



Sample S001 Gram staining, Additional finding



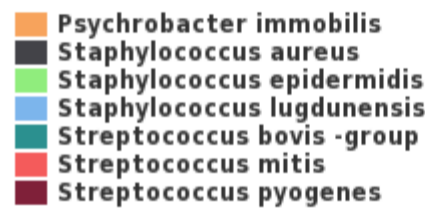
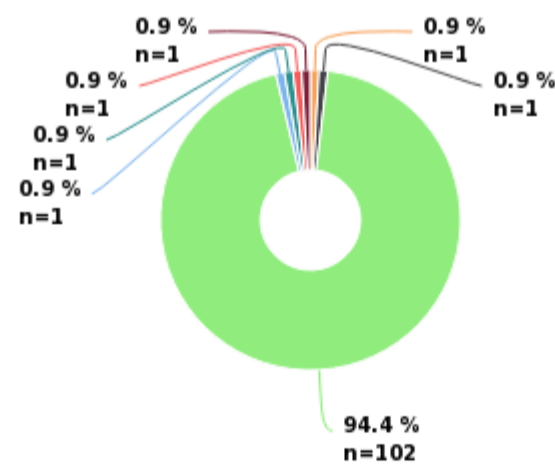
GRAM STAINING

Finding group	Result	Result count
Staphylococcus epidermidis		184
	Grampositive cocci	50
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	126
	Grampositive cocci in chains	7
	Gramnegative rod	1
Additional finding		6
	Grampositive cocci	3
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	1
	Grampositive rod	1
	Gram variable rod	1
Total:		190

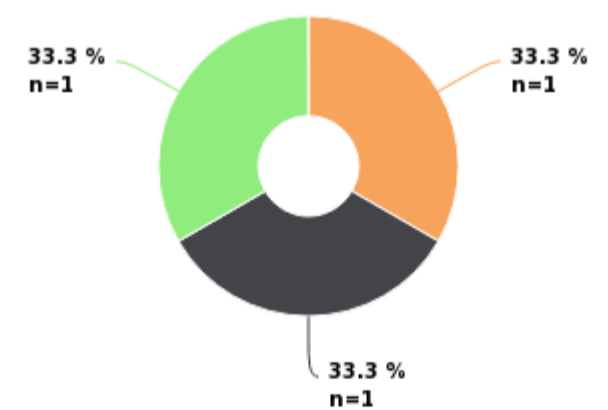
Sample S001 Identification test kits and analyzers, Staphylococcus epidermidis



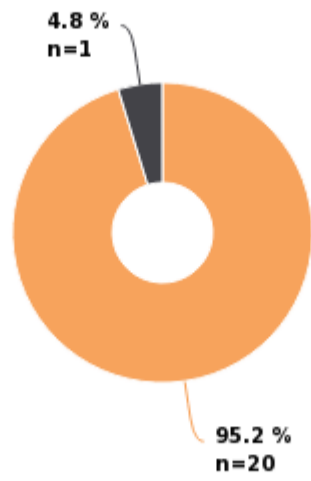
Sample S001 Identification tests: MALDI-TOF, Staphylococcus epidermidis



Sample S001 Identification tests: MALDI-TOF, Additional finding



Sample S001 Identification tests: NAT and DNA-sequencing, Staphylococcus epidermidis



■ Staphylococcus epidermidis
■ Streptococcus pyogenes

IDENTIFICATION TEST KITS AND ANALYZERS

Finding group	Method	Result	Profile number	Profile number count	
Staphylococcus epidermidis	MicroScan Walk-Away (Beckman Coulter)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	N/A	2	
	VITEK 2 (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	0704000076721231	1	
			110000076621211	1	
			070400076621211	2	
			030400076621231	3	
			030400076621211	2	
			020400074620211	1	
			020000074621211	1	
			010400074621211	1	
			010000056220211	1	
			01040054620211	1	
			GP2422277103351648	1	
			GP	1	
			N/A	8	
			Streptococcus pyogenes	N/A	1
		VITEK 2 Compact 15 (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	030400076621211	1
				030000076621211	1
				000400074620211	1
		VITEK 2 Compact 30 (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	030400076621231	1
				030400076621211	1
			030400074620211	1	
			000400074621211	1	
			N/A	2	
Total:				36	

IDENTIFICATION TESTS: MALDI-TOF

Finding group	Method	Result	Score / Probability %	Score / Probability % count	
Staphylococcus epidermidis	Autof MALDI-ToF (Chirus)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	9.5..10	1	
	MALDI Biotyper (Bruker)	Psychrobacter immobilis	≥1.7..<2	1	
		Staphylococcus aureus	≥2	1	
		Staphylococcus epidermidis	≥2	61	
			≥1.7..<2	5	
			N/A	1	
		Streptococcus bovis -group	≥2	1	
		Streptococcus mitis	≥2	1	
		VITEK MS (bioMérieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	99,9 %	28
				99 %	2
				91,4 %	1
				N/A	3
			Staphylococcus lugdunensis	99,9 %	1

		Streptococcus pyogenes	99,9 %	1
Additional finding	MALDI Biotyper (Bruker)	Bacillus sp.	≥1.7..<2	1
		Staphylococcus epidermidis	≥2	1
		Staphylococcus warneri	≥2	1
Total:				111

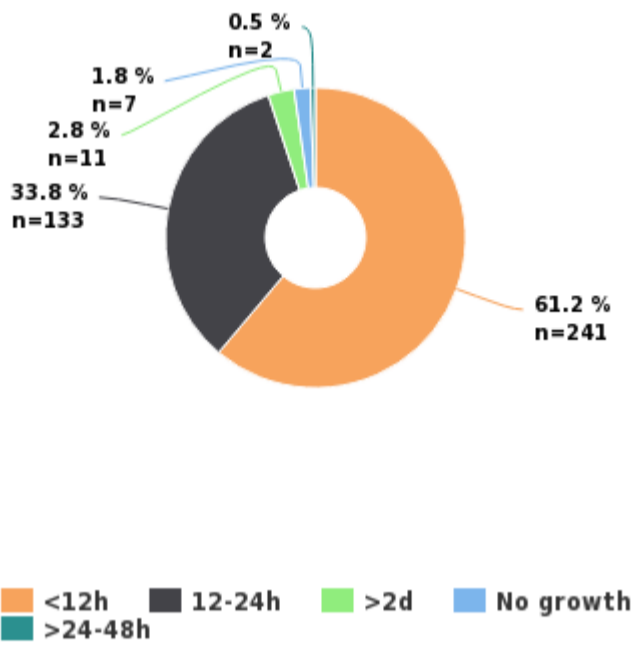
IDENTIFICATION TESTS: NAT AND DNA-SEQUENCING

Finding group	Method	Result	Result count
Staphylococcus epidermidis	BioFire Filmarray BCID2 Panel (bioMerieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	16
		Streptococcus pyogenes	1
	ePlex BCID-GP Panel (GenMark)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	3
		NAT, In house	Staphylococcus epidermidis
Total:			21

Sample S002 | Streptococcus pyogenes

Sample S002 results	Responded	Count
	Growth medium and incubation period	394
	Gram staining	188
	Identification test kits and analyzers	32
	Identification tests: MALDI-TOF	103
	Identification tests: NAT and DNA-sequencing	23

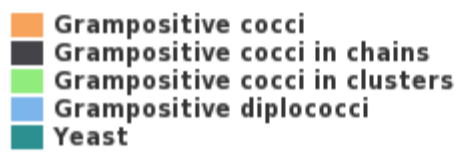
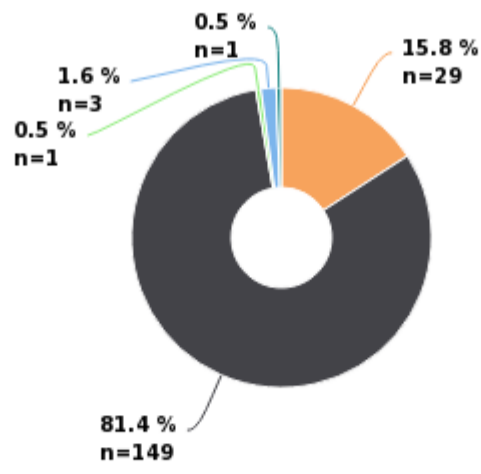
Sample S002 Growth medium and incubation period



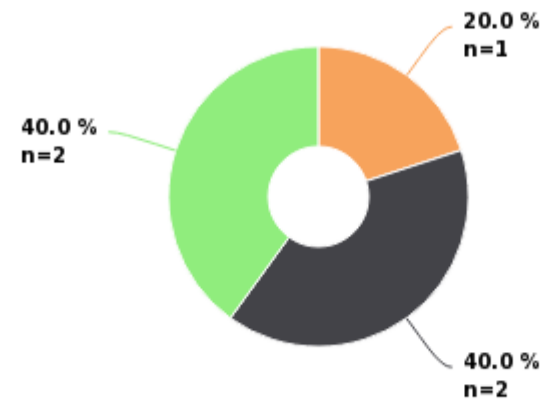
GROWTH MEDIUM AND INCUBATION PERIOD

Medium type	Growth medium	No growth	<12h	12-24h	>24-48h	>2d	Growth medium count
Aerobic bottle	BacT/ALERT BPA bioMerieux		3				3
	BacT/ALERT FA bioMerieux		4	4			8
	BacT/ALERT FA plus bioMerieux	1	39	23	1		64
	BacT/ALERT PF bioMerieux		2	2			4
	BacT/ALERT SA bioMerieux	1	8	9		1	19
	BD Bactec Peds Plus/F Becton Dickinson		8	4		1	13
	BD Bactec Plus Aerobic/F Becton Dickinson	2	59	17		3	81
	BD Bactec Standard/10 Aerobic/F Becton Dickinson		3	2			5
	VersaTREK Redoz 1EZ Thermo Scientific		1				1
Aerobic- and anaerobic bottle	Oxoid Signal Blood Culture System Thermo Scientific		5	12		1	18
Anaerobic bottle	BacT/ALERT BPN bioMerieux		2				2
	BacT/ALERT FN bioMerieux		1	3			4
	BacT/ALERT FN plus bioMerieux		33	31	1		65
	BacT/ALERT SN bioMerieux	1	12	7		1	21
	BD Bactec Lytic/10 Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		43	8		2	53
	BD Bactec Plus Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson	2	17	10		2	31
	BD Bactec Standard/10 Anaerobic/F Becton Dickinson		1	1			2
Total:		7	241	133	2	11	394

Sample S002 Gram staining, Streptococcus pyogenes



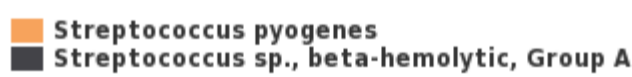
Sample S002 Gram staining, Additional finding



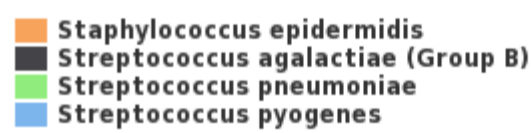
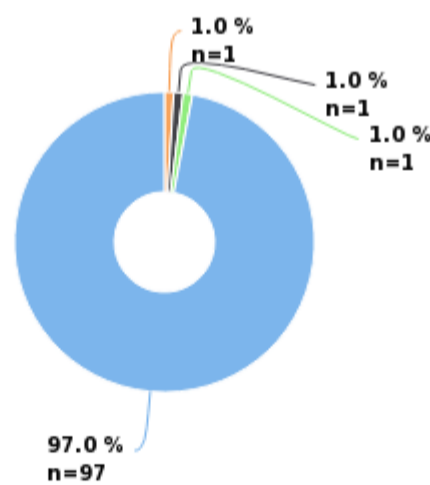
GRAM STAINING

Finding group	Result	Result count
Streptococcus pyogenes		183
	Grampositive cocci	29
	Grampositive cocci in chains	149
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	1
	Grampositive diplococci	3
	Yeast	1
Additional finding		5
	Grampositive cocci	1
	Grampositive cocci in chains	2
	Grampositive cocci in clusters	2
Total:		188

Sample S002 Identification test kits and analyzers, Streptococcus pyogenes



Sample S002 Identification tests: MALDI-TOF, Streptococcus pyogenes



Sample S002 Identification tests: MALDI-TOF, Additional finding



Sample S002 Identification tests: NAT and DNA-sequencing, Streptococcus pyogenes



■ Staphylococcus epidermidis
■ Streptococcus pyogenes

IDENTIFICATION TEST KITS AND ANALYZERS

Finding group	Method	Result	Profile number	Profile number count	
Streptococcus pyogenes	BBL Crystal Gram-Positive ID Kit (Becton Dickinson)	Streptococcus pyogenes	N/A	1	
	MicroScan Walk-Away (Beckman Coulter)	Streptococcus pyogenes	N/A	2	
	RapID STR (Thermo Scientific)	Streptococcus sp., beta-hemolytic, Group A	N/A	1	
	VITEK 2 (bioMerieux)	Streptococcus pyogenes	051412364713671	1	
			051412364713271	1	
			051412360713271	1	
			051412360313671	1	
			051412360311671	1	
			051412360311471	1	
			051412344313071	1	
			051412304313031	1	
			051412300311271	2	
			011412364313671	1	
			011412364313271	1	
			011412324211031	1	
			GP	1	
			GP	1	
			2422277103351703	1	
			N/A	5	
			Streptococcus sp., beta-hemolytic, Group A	N/A	1
			VITEK 2 Compact 15 (bioMerieux)	Streptococcus pyogenes	051412324313271
1514123443431					1
VITEK 2 Compact 30 (bioMerieux)	Streptococcus pyogenes	051412364313271	1		
		051412320313271	1		
		011412364311071	1		
		N/A	2		
Total:				32	

IDENTIFICATION TESTS: MALDI-TOF

Finding group	Method	Result	Score / Probability %	Score / Probability % count	
Streptococcus pyogenes	MALDI Biotyper (Bruker)	Streptococcus agalactiae (Group B)	≥2	1	
		Streptococcus pyogenes	≥2	64	
			≥1.7..<2	1	
			N/A	1	
	VITEK MS (bioMérieux)	Streptococcus pyogenes	Staphylococcus epidermidis	99,9 %	1
			Streptococcus pneumoniae	99,9 %	1
			Streptococcus pyogenes	99,9 %	27
		99 %	1		
		N/A	3		
Additional finding	MALDI Biotyper (Bruker)	Staphylococcus aureus	≥2	2	

		Streptococcus pyogenes	≥2	1
Total:				103

IDENTIFICATION TESTS: NAT AND DNA-SEQUENCING

Finding group	Method	Result	Result count
Streptococcus pyogenes	BioFire Filmarray BCID2 Panel (bioMerieux)	Staphylococcus epidermidis	2
		Streptococcus pyogenes	16
	ePlex BCID-GP Panel (GenMark)	Streptococcus pyogenes	3
		NAT, In house	Streptococcus pyogenes
Total:			23

External Quality Assessment Scheme

Blood Culture (5100) Blood Culture, screening (5101) Rounds 1, 2023

This report replaces the preliminary report. The final report also includes the expert comments on the susceptibility testing results. We apologize for the inconvenience caused by the delay in publication.

Specimens

The round included two lyophilized samples. The sample lots were tested in an accredited Finnish reference laboratory and the results were consistent with the certificates provided by the sample manufacturer. Based on the quality controls conducted by the sample material manufacturer, pre-testing and the results obtained in the round, the sample lots are to be considered as homogeneous, stable and suitable for external quality assessment. The materials were sent without temperature control packaging.

The use of samples only for external quality assessment. The consent of Labquality must be requested for the use of the microbial strains contained in the samples for other purposes.

The content of the samples was as follows:

Sample S001 (LQ761823011)
Staphylococcus epidermidis KSKS 2852

Näyte S002 (LQ761823012)
Streptococcus pyogenes ATCC® 19615™

Report info

Please see the description of the data analysis on the last page of the laboratory-specific reports and global reports. It is important to read the Final report first, as it contains important information of the samples and results in each round.

Comments – Experts

Sample S001

Background information: A long-term ICU patient with cannula-related sepsis.

The sample contained *Staphylococcus epidermidis*. If the sample was handled according to the instructions, $>10^3$ CFUs were transferred into one blood culture bottle.

Growth: In all 208/209 (99.5%) of the participating laboratories reported growth in the sample.

Of the screening laboratories 74% (55/74) stated to report a preliminary identification result to the clinician based on gram staining and/or other identification methods. Altogether 71% (39/55) of these laboratories reported gram positive cocci as expected. Additionally, 18% (10/55) reported *Staphylococcus epidermidis* based on a direct nucleic acid test from a positive blood culture bottle. One laboratory (2%) reported erroneously a gram negative rod, and merely growth, without a gram staining result, was reported by 9% (5/55) of these laboratories. Four screening laboratories reported an unexpected second finding.

Altogether 26% (19/74) of the screening laboratories were not performing preliminary identification and 95% (18/19) of them reported merely growth as

2023-05-09

FINAL REPORT

Product no. 5100-5101

Subcontracting: Sample pretesting

Samples sent	2023-02-21
Round closed	2023-03-17
Expected results	2023-03-21
Preliminary report	2023-04-24
Final report	2023-05-09

Request for correction

Typing errors in laboratory's result forms are on laboratory's responsibility. Labquality accepts responsibility only for result processing. Requests must be notified by writing within three weeks from the date of this letter.

Authorized by

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expected.

Identification: 92% (124/135) of the participants identified the growth correctly as *Staphylococcus epidermidis*. Two laboratories reported the finding merely to the genus level, *Staphylococcus* sp., the other with an additional information of the isolate being coagulase negative. Altogether, 4% (5/135) of the results were erroneous species or genus level identifications. Three laboratories had most probably mixed up the samples at some point, as they reported *Streptococcus pyogenes* from this sample.

In all, four second findings were reported: *Staphylococcus epidermidis* (2), *Staphylococcus warneri* (1) and *Bacillus* sp. (1). So, two laboratories reported two separate *S. epidermidis* findings, which differed from each other by their antimicrobial susceptibility profiles.

Comments on susceptibility test results

This strain of *S. epidermidis* is resistant to ceftiofur and, therefore, to other beta-lactams.

The strain is also resistant to fusidic acid and tobramycin. Its susceptibility to teicoplanin, tetracycline and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole is close to the S/R breakpoint. This time, even the reference laboratories did not reach a consensus for trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole and teicoplanin: The results of the laboratory using the broth microdilution method were resistant, while the laboratory using gradient tests interpreted both as susceptible. The strain does not have a *vanA* or *vanB* gene, so the reduced glycopeptide susceptibility is based on other mechanisms.

The overall performance of the laboratories with this strain was very good. Only one erroneous S result was reported to ceftiofur and one to fusidic acid. There was considerable dispersion only for the three antibiotics with susceptibility close to the S/R breakpoint: teicoplanin, tetracycline and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole. Typically, MIC results of those antibiotics were more resistant than their disk diffusion results.

It is reasonable to send a strain like this, whose susceptibilities to glycopeptides are close to the S/R breakpoint and even somewhat conflicting (as here with the broth microdilution results vancomycin S and teicoplanin R), to a reference laboratory for further investigation.

Table 1. The MIC results reported by two Finnish reference laboratories of the *Staphylococcus epidermidis* KSKS 2852 strain. The reference laboratories followed the EUCAST guideline.

Antimicrobial agent	Ref. laboratory 1		Ref. laboratory 2	
	MIC (mg/L)	SIR	MIC (mg/L)	SIR
Ceftiofur (screen)	-	-	-	R ¹
Ciprofloxacin	0.125	I	≤0.5	I
Clindamycin	0.064	S	≤0.12	S
Gentamicin	0.25	S	≤0.5	S
Rifampicin	0.003	S	<0.03	S
Teicoplanin	3	S	8	R
Trimethoprim-sulfa.	1.5	S	8	R
Vancomycin	1	S	2	S

¹Determined by disk diffusion method, zone diameter 16 mm

Sample S002

Background information: A 23-year-old male with severe wound infection.

The sample contained *Streptococcus pyogenes*. If the sample was handled according to the instructions, >10³ CFUs were transferred into one blood culture bottle.

Growth: In all 206/209 (98.6%) of the participating laboratories reported growth in the sample.

Of the screening laboratories 74% (55/74) stated to report a preliminary identification result to the clinician based on gram staining and/or other identification methods. Altogether 71% (39/55) of these laboratories reported grampositive cocci as expected. Additionally, 16% (9/55) reported *Streptococcus pyogenes* based on a direct nucleic acid test from a positive blood culture bottle. One participant (2%) reported the finding erroneously as yeast and one (2%) as *Streptococcus agalactiae*. In all, 9% (5/55) reported merely growth, without a gram staining result. Two laboratories reported anaerobe grampositive cocci as an unexpected second finding.

Altogether 26% (19/74) of the screening laboratories were not performing preliminary identification and all of them reported growth as expected.

Identification: 94% (127/135) of the participants reported the expected result, *Streptococcus pyogenes* or Group A beta-hemolytic streptococcus. Altogether, 1% (2/135) of the results were erroneous species level identifications (*S. agalactiae*, *S. pneumoniae*). Additionally, the *Staphylococcus epidermidis* findings reported from this sample are likely due to a mix-up of samples S001 and S002 in the laboratories. In all, 2 % (3/135) reported the sample as negative.

Three unexpected second findings were reported: *Streptococcus pyogenes* (1) and *Staphylococcus aureus* (2).

Exceptions in scoring

No exceptions

End of report

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