

Update on ESVE EQA Scheme (VEEEQAS) September 2013

Summary

There have been 2 releases of the scheme so far, one in November 2012 and the other in May 2013.

Participant numbers increased from 21 to 26 (24%) between the releases. In release 002, 134 analytical results were provided by 26 laboratories using 62 methods. Release 001 was canine and release 002 was feline. Because there is still statistically speaking a relatively small number of participants and because the most popular methods may not be the correct methods, we have not yet reached the stage that we are publishing method names. However, we do re-confirm the individual method names used by the participant on their participant reports.

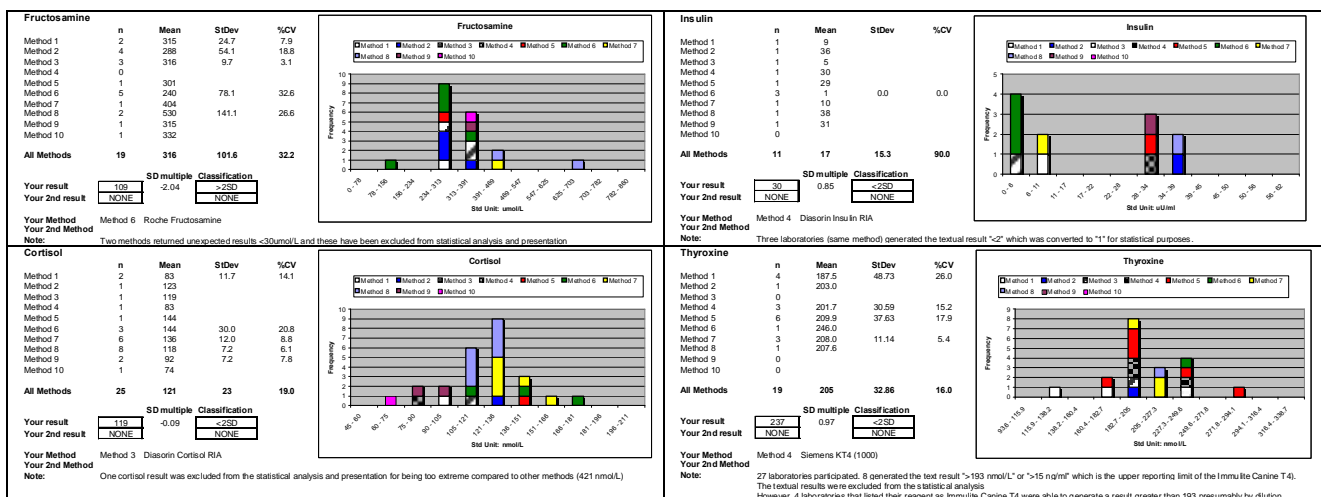
No returned results were excluded from statistical analysis in release 001. Three were excluded from release 002 (2 x too low fructosamine and 1 x too high cortisol)

We have worked hard to clarify the names of methods used so that the results are grouped appropriately. This has involved more active communication with participants than is often the case for schemes such as this but it has been a really important part of the process.

After each release, each participating lab receives their own individualised copy of the results including a classification of their performance against the group for each analyte (e.g., < 2 SD, 2-3 SD or > 3SD) and also an anonymised summary ESVE report. Each report has a commentary attached provided by the scheme co-ordinator (Peter Graham)

ESVE quality committee also receives the anonymised report and committee chair is copied into any correspondence about the results or suggested changes to methods that happen as a consequence of the report.

Example Report contents and Findings so far



The most concerning results on both releases have been cortisol and fructosamine with regard to the spread of results generated. On both releases it has also been clear that some methods cannot detect canine and feline insulin although several other methods can.

Outcomes

Participants appear to appreciate the existence of the scheme very much. All have been helpful in responding to clarification questions when required.

With regard to positive outcomes for European Veterinary Endocrinology, we have data to indicate that certain methods are unsuitable for insulin analysis and this must now be clear to the participating labs. We need to find a way to work on more consistent fructosamine and cortisol results.

A couple of labs have already implemented changes following their participation in the scheme; one has stopped using a particular method and another has corrected their reporting units.

For the extremes of results for other methods, we would hope that laboratories will investigate their methods with comparison to reference standards, other labs, dilution or mixing experiments and internal QC to identify whether method continues to offer acceptable performance.

Next steps

Depending on materials available for the next release in November 2013 we propose the inclusion of Free T4 and oestradiol. Both these analytes have controversy surrounding them with regard to their correct measurement. We have received returned results also for testosterone and cTLI which we can also consider including in the analytical report.

The original plan was that the anonymised ESVE report be available on the ESVE website and that labs that participate in the scheme could also be listed on the ESVE website. Both of these actions may assist in the recruitment of further participants.

Further information is available from Peter Graham (eqa.esve@gmail.com) scheme co-ordinator or Lucy Davison ESVE Quality committee.