

# Blood Culture Checklist in Critical Care

## Pre-procedure

### Team:

- Operator
- Assistant (bedside nurse)

### Patient:

- Consent: informed or best interest.
- Risk assess if eye protection or FFP3 PPE is required for operator

## Considerations

- Discuss with senior team member (ACCP/ST3+/Consultant)
- Has the patient already had recent blood cultures taken?
- What was the microbiology plan from the ward round?
- If a central line infection is suspected – paired samples **must** be taken and differential time to positivity requested
- If endocarditis is suspected 3 pairs from 3 different locations must be sampled

## Equipment:

- Blood Culture bottles (one set per site)
- Blood Culture Pack (this contains a vacutainer system, multity needle, tourniquet gauze and sterile drape).
- Fenestrated drape
- Sterile gloves
- Chloraprep 3ml applicator
- 2x Alcohol surface wipe with 2% Chlorhexidine
- Sterile ultrasound probe cover
- Blood culture request form
- Specimen bag
- Sharp Waste disposal bin

## Time out - Just before the procedure, ensure that:

### Team:

- Availability of assistant throughout the procedure.

### Site Location:

- Peripheral venepuncture is preferred (use ultrasound guidance if difficult)
- Avoid areas of cellulitis and broken skin
- If peripheral site is not possible discuss with senior.
- Order of preference for non-peripheral site
  1. NEW arterial line insertion
  2. NEW CVC insertion with initial 10mls of blood discarded (initial puncture only)

### Equipment:

- Ensure full aseptic technique with well-fitting sterile gloves
- Strict hand hygiene as per Trust handwashing policy
- Ensure all equipment is at hand

### Patient, assess:

- If patient sedated consider temporarily increasing to ensure maintenance of sterile field
- Site of venepuncture remains untouched following skin preparation

## Safety precautions throughout procedure:

- Remove the plastic covers from the blood culture bottles and clean the tops with a friction scrub technique for 30 seconds using 3 parts of the 2% chlorhexidine containing surface wipe.
- Clean the proposed site of venepuncture with 3ml Chloraprep applicator for 30 seconds using back and forth + side to side strokes.
- Do not re-palpate vein prior to venepuncture - use USS guidance with sterile probe cover if difficult
- Inoculate aerobic blood culture before anaerobic - fill each with 8 – 10mls of blood.

## Post procedure:

- Label blood culture samples and place in specimen bag
- Dispose of sharps safely
- Clear away used equipment and clean ANTT bedside trolley
- Document in clinical notes that blood cultures were sampled and from which site (#Bloodculture)