

Caring for staff and patients; benefits all round with the FE500™ and a Te-Care™ Service Contract

The Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital relies on an FE500 pre-analytical sample handling platform and a Te-Care Service Contract, ably supported by Tecan's certified field service engineers, to ensure uninterrupted processing of blood samples for its clinical departments.

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Wentworth-Douglass Hospital in Dover, New Hampshire, USA – the Seacoast's leading medical center – provides services to an area that also includes Eliot and South Berwick in Maine, and Lee and Barrington in New Hampshire. Darlene Bickford, Support Services Manager at Wentworth-Douglass, manages both the in-house and outreach phlebotomists, supporting them and the lab aids in the anatomic and clinical laboratories. The hospital's in-house phlebotomists service all of the units on a three shift system, and they are also responsible for processing all specimens that come into the central laboratory, including those from a number of outreach laboratories, the busiest of which can have around 100 patients in a 12-hour time period.

Darlene explained: "As you can imagine, this is a very high throughput department and the main reason for buying the FE500 was to help us process the 1,600 or so samples that come from our outreach program and in-house patients each day. The system is installed in our main laboratory here at Wentworth-Douglass, centrally located between our support services and technical areas, and all our specimens – with the exception of stats which are sent straight through to the laboratory – are processed on the FE500."

Darlene continued: "All the samples are barcoded, enabling the FE500 to communicate all information to our LIS.





The Wentworth-Douglass team with the FE500. Front row, left to right: Bob Rickard, Dottie Robichaud, Karen Martin and Tammy Fermino; back row, left to right: Arielle Vachon, Darlene Bickford, Patty Sheckler and Katie Gosselin

Clot detection is an important feature of the system, as is the fact that it also centrifuges samples. After labeling a secondary tube, the FE500 aliquots the specimen and places the tube into the appropriate carrier, where it is ready for collection by the technicians or phlebotomists. It's a really slick, walkaway system. We don't have to worry about forgetting samples that are in the centrifuge or have to wait around to unload them, we just put them on and walk away. We find the FE500 very easy to use and it copes easily with our high sample throughput. It has also reduced the risk of exposing our phlebotomists to blood-borne pathogens through splashing, and improved our turnaround times."

For such an important high throughput, 24/7 application, maximum up-time is essential and covered, in this case, by a Te-Care Service Contract. Darlene added: "Our service contract includes preventive maintenance and, on the occasions when we have needed additional support, I have simply sent an email and had an immediate response. Often, they can talk us through any issues and solve problems over the phone but, if a site visit is necessary, an engineer always arrives very quickly. The response from Tecan is tremendous."

"In the beginning it was a big transition from manual processing to using the FE500 and, at this time especially, Tecan's support was excellent, providing us with training and



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helping us through the implementation. Bringing in this new analyzer for the front end was a huge change but was a really good move. Processing everything manually would be very time-consuming, taking our phlebotomists away from caring for patients, and we just can't imagine being without the FE500."

To find out more on Tecan's Te-Care Service Contracts, visit www.tecan.com/services

To find out more about Wentworth-Douglass, visit www.wdhospital.com

