

## **PROVINCIAL LABORATORY SERVICES COMMUNIQUÉ**

---

**TO: Island Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Educators, and Nurse Managers**

**FROM: Jennifer Dowling, Medical Laboratory Technologist II, Microbiology (QEH)  
Dr. Greg German, Health PEI Medical Microbiologist**

**DATE: June 29, 2015**

**RE: Blood Culture Utilization and Quality 2012-2014**

---

In 2014, over 5,100 blood cultures were drawn from patients across the Island. Blood cultures are one of the most important microbiological tests available to the clinician. Utilization of this diagnostic tool is a quality indicator. Island-wide data for 2012, 2013 and 2014 is provided below.

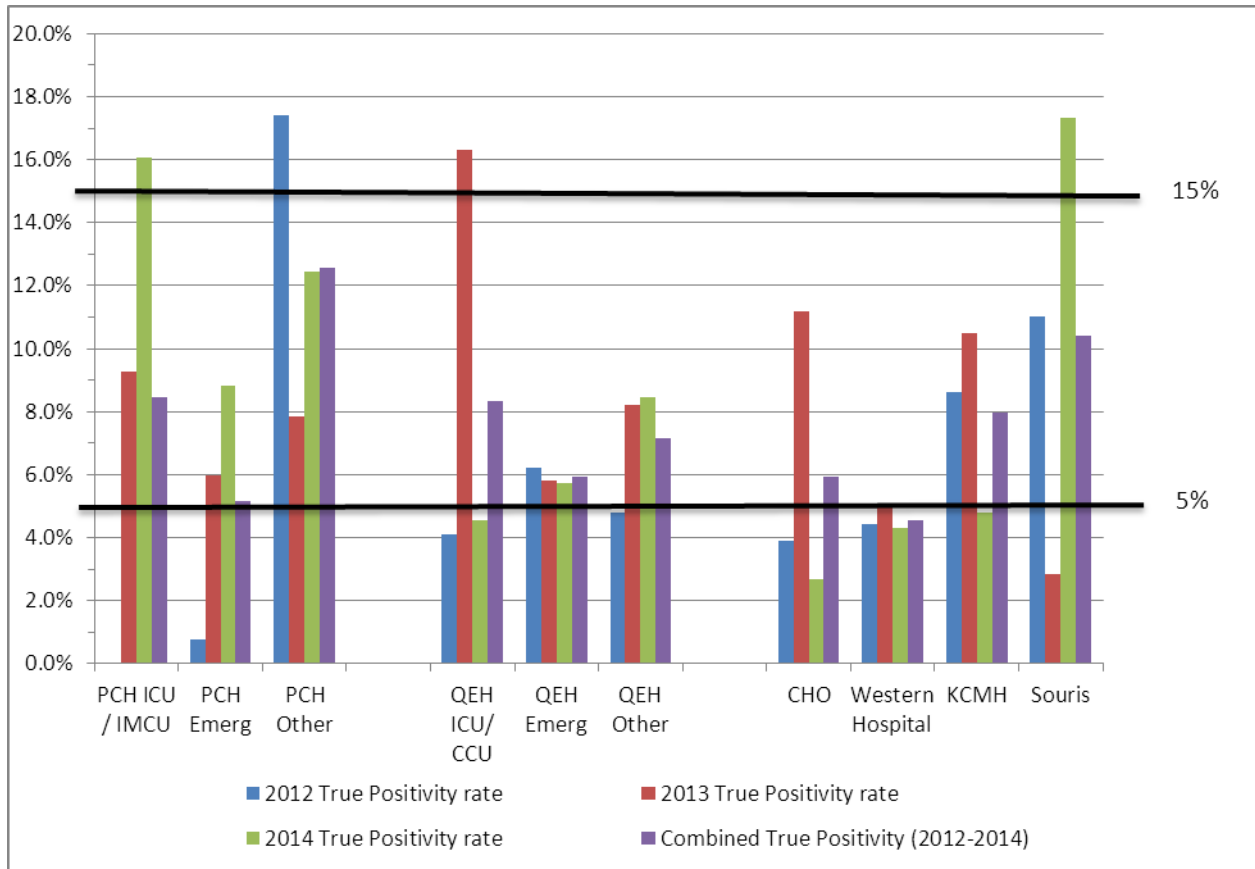
To interpret, consider the following:

- True positivity is the percentage of blood cultures without contamination.
- Based on a utilization standard of 5 – 15% of true positivity:
  - A true positivity of less than 5% indicates that blood cultures are being collected too often
  - A true positivity of greater than 15% indicates that blood cultures are not being collected often enough
- Using a target rate for contamination set at  $\leq 3\%$ , most sites throughout the province are doing well with regard to collection technique.
- Where small numbers of blood cultures are collected, rates fluctuate greatly which is why aggregate rates are provided.
- Under- and over-filling blood culture bottles can reduce the amount of positive cultures (Optimal volume is 10mL for an adult bottle with an acceptable range of 8 to 12mL).

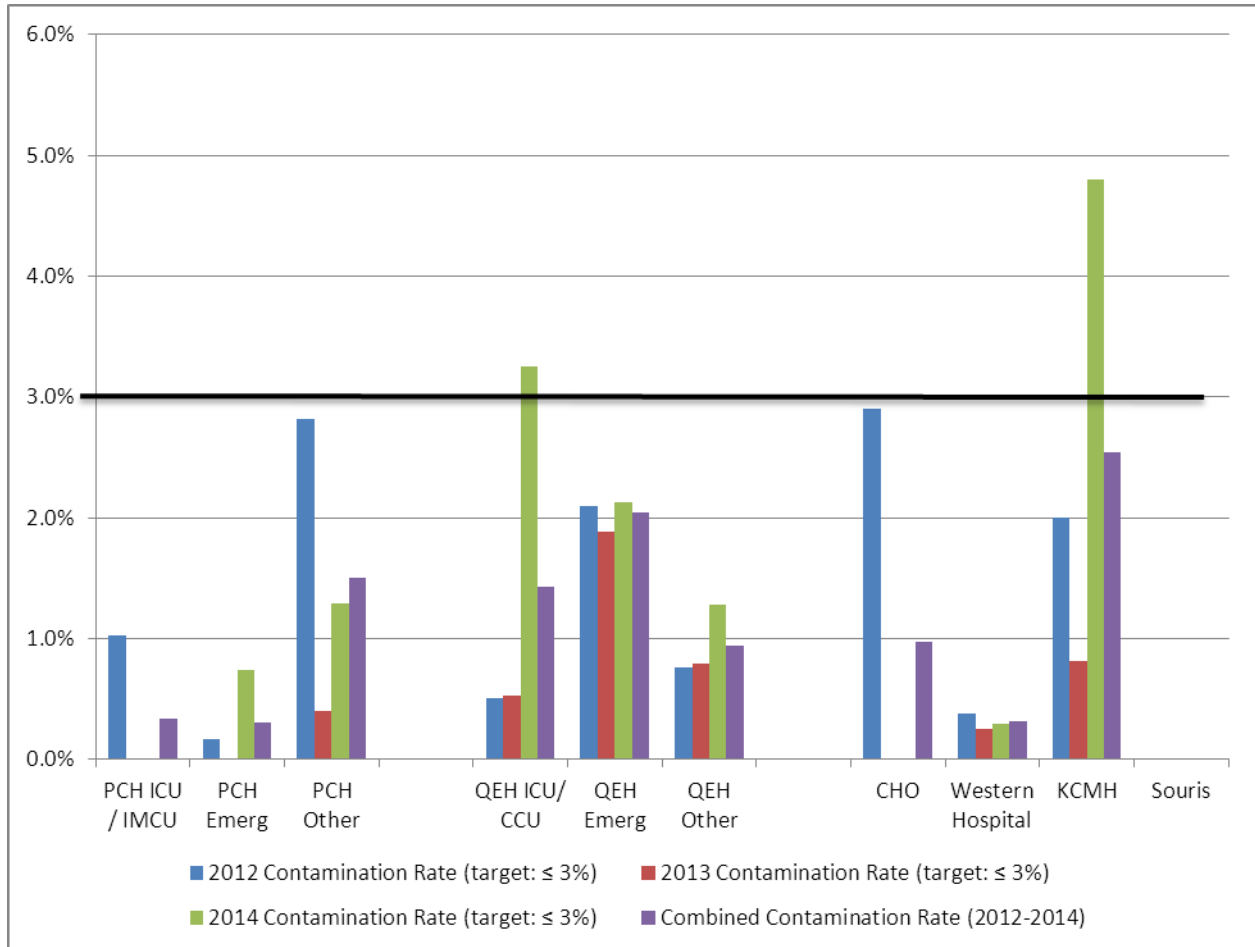
This information will soon be located at [www.healthpei.ca/micro](http://www.healthpei.ca/micro). Complete unit specific information is available upon request ([jdowling@ihis.org](mailto:jdowling@ihis.org)).

CC:  
Dr. Humaira Khanam  
Dr. Greg German  
Brenda Worth  
Brian Timmons  
Sharlene Fennell  
Andrea Dowling  
Becky Moore

True Positivity Rates (2012, 2013, and 2014) – Target 5-15%



Contamination Rates (2012, 2013, and 2014)




---

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Jennifer Dowling: [jldowling@ihis.org](mailto:jldowling@ihis.org)**

---

**<http://www.healthpei.ca/laboratoryservices>**