

Project scope: prostate specific antigen testing

October 2024

Research question

The main research question is:

How long do total and free prostate specific antigen (PSA) levels remain stable in blood and serum samples?

Inclusion criteria

The selection of studies for inclusion in the literature review element of the project will be based on the following criteria:

- total and free prostate specific antigen (PSA) levels
- testing of whole blood or serum samples (serum samples are derived from blood on arrival at a laboratory)
- duration of time the sample remains stable after extraction from the body, including time taken to transfer to a laboratory for testing, stability in storage or transit, preanalytical stability.

Planned activities

SHTG have agreed on the following activities to support the development of an SHTG Assessment on prostate specific antigen testing:

- A systematic review of published clinical effectiveness and cost effectiveness evidence.
- A peer-review process will be conducted to give topic experts an opportunity to comment on the review of the evidence.

End products

At the end of the project SHTG will publish:

- An SHTG Assessment on prostate specific antigen testing, including a review of the evidence on clinical effectiveness, cost effectiveness, safety and organisational issues.
- A plain language summary.

Timescales (approximate)

February 2025