



Unresolved Paternity: a barrier to progress

Casey Randall, Director of Genetics at AlphaBiolabs, discusses the benefits of Non-invasive Prenatal Paternity testing for Family Court

Uncertainty surrounding a child's paternity can cause significant complications in Family Court proceedings. In cases involving safeguarding, child maintenance, or parental responsibility, the absence of clear paternity can delay critical decisions, complicate care planning, and heighten tensions between parties.

Whilst standard paternity DNA tests are now well understood and frequently used in the legal sector, many legal professionals are still not aware that paternity disputes can also be resolved even before the child is born.

Thanks to developments in DNA testing, Non-Invasive Prenatal Paternity testing (NIPP) offers a safe, scientifically-robust solution for determining paternity during pregnancy, with no risk whatsoever to the mother or unborn child.

What is NIPP testing and how does it work?

NIPP testing allows paternity to be established from as early as 7 weeks into pregnancy, with only a blood sample and cheek (buccal) swabs from the mother required, along with cheek swabs from the alleged father(s).

Expert geneticists extract the baby's DNA profile from foetal DNA found in the mother's bloodstream and compare this with the DNA profile of the alleged father. The biological father will share DNA with the baby at every tested marker. If the tested man is not the biological father, this will not be the case.

Unlike invasive forms of prenatal paternity testing which require cells to be

obtained from either the amniotic fluid or the placenta – carrying a small risk of miscarriage – NIPP testing is 100% risk free for mother and baby.

AlphaBiolabs' NIPP test is the most advanced available. We are also the only UK DNA testing laboratory to hold UKAS ISO 17025 accreditation for prenatal paternity testing.

When NIPP testing should be considered

Establishing paternity during pregnancy offers clear advantages for family law professionals, social workers and local authorities involved in complex or time-sensitive family law matters.

Where paternity is in doubt, timely resolution can reduce conflict, accelerate proceedings, and ensure the welfare of the unborn child is prioritised.

NIPP testing is particularly beneficial in:

- ▶ **Safeguarding and care planning**, where biological relationships need to be confirmed to assess risk or consider alternative care arrangements before birth.
- ▶ **Disputed paternity cases** that may affect decisions on parental responsibility, child contact or maintenance.
- ▶ **Cases involving multiple possible fathers**, where identifying the correct biological parent is essential for progressing proceedings.
- ▶ **Mediation and early resolution**, helping to clarify facts, reduce hostility, and encourage cooperation between parties.

In each of these scenarios, resolving paternity before birth supports more informed and early decision-making, reducing the need for urgent, reactive measures after the baby is born, and easing the emotional burden for all involved.

NIPP testing from the UK's No.1 DNA lab

AlphaBiolabs' NIPP testing represents the gold standard in prenatal paternity testing, analysing up to 153 DNA markers for unparalleled accuracy, and making it possible to confirm paternity as early as 7 weeks into pregnancy.

More reasons to choose AlphaBiolabs:

- ▶ The only UK laboratory with UKAS ISO 17025 accreditation for NIPP testing
- ▶ Rapid results guaranteed
- ▶ 100% safe for mother and baby
- ▶ Expert advice and a dedicated Case Manager to fully manage your instruction
- ▶ Sample collections from any location within 24-48 hours of instruction
- ▶ FREE legally-instructed sample collections from our 21 walk-in centres across the UK & Ireland
- ▶ All pricing within Legal Aid Agency rates
- ▶ Ministry of Justice approved to carry out parentage testing
- ▶ **Price Promise:** we will beat any like-for-like quote by a further 10%
- ▶ Expert Report included, for no additional fee

For more information, contact our New Enquiry team on 0333 600 1300 / testing@alphabiolabs.com or complete our online quote form <https://www.alphabiolabs.co.uk/legal-test-forms/>, and a member of the team will be happy to discuss the requirements of your case.

Casey Randall, Director of Genetics at AlphaBiolabs

Casey joined the AlphaBiolabs team in 2012 and heads up the Genetics laboratory, overseeing the DNA and Health testing teams.

An expert in DNA analysis and a member of the International Society for Forensic Genetics (ISFG), Casey holds an MSc with Distinction in DNA Profiling and a First-Class BSc with Honours in Forensic Science.

Casey is responsible for maintaining the highest quality testing standards, as well as looking for ways to further enhance the service that AlphaBiolabs provides and exploring new and innovative techniques in DNA analysis.

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