Specimen Acceptance and Rejection

PURPOSE:

Proper collection and identification of laboratory samples is a significant factor in patient safety. Specimens must be collected in a manner that protects the integrity of the sample. Improperly collected, contaminated, delayed, or altered specimens may result in incorrect interpretations of the patient's clinical condition. Accuracy of patient identification and specimen labeling is essential to maintain patient safety.

SCOPE & RESPONSIBILITY:

That all specimens received by the lab are properly labeled by person collecting the specimen.

PROCEDURE:

Testing will not be performed on specimens that do not meet the criteria listed:

• All specimens must be labeled in the presence of the patient at the time of collection with two patient identifiers.
• All specimens must have the following information on the specimen (preferred) or on a paper requisition:
  ◦ Collection Date
  ◦ Collection Time
  ◦ Initials of or identification of the collector or laboratory tech code
  ◦ Site and/or source for non-blood samples
• All cytology and pathology specimens need a pathology and cytology paper provider requisition/order.
• The following information must be available to the lab electronically or on a paper requisition:
  ◦ Patient name
  ◦ Patient date of birth
  ◦ Patient address (when needed)
  ◦ Patient location
  ◦ Patient gender
  ◦ Provider full name
  ◦ Provider address (when needed)
  ◦ Tests required
  ◦ Last menstrual period (when needed for clinical interpretation on gynecological specimens)
  ◦ Clinical diagnosis
• The two patient identifiers on the requisitions must match those on the specimen.
Specimens that do not meet the above criteria will be rejected by the laboratory and resubmission will be requested.

Exceptions are only made for precious or irreplaceable specimens with the approval of a pathologist. Precious specimens or irreplaceable specimens are defined as specimens for which:

- Recollection will absolutely not reflect the original collection
- The sample cannot be collected without high risk to the patient
- A delay due to recollection could compromise patient care
- A recollection is not possible (ex. placenta)

In these instances, the final report will indicate the nature of the problem and that caution is required when interpreting the report.

For the specific collection of Blood Bank specimens, refer to St Luke Hospital Blood Bank Specimen Collection & Patient Identification.
Laboratory Specimen Requirements:

1. Collect and handle the specimen according to testing requirements to maintain specimen integrity. Requirements can be located in the ProMedica Laboratories Specimen Collection Manual at http://promedicalabs.testcatalog.org/. These requirements include, but are not limited to:
   - Specimen container type
   - Fasting status
   - Time intervals
   - Transportation and/or storage of specimen prior to delivery to the laboratory
2. Label the specimen in the presence of the patient at the time of collection.
3. Label the primary specimen tubes/containers in a complete and legible manner with two patient identifiers as per business unit specific policy. ProMedica Laboratories’ accepted identifiers include:
   ◦ Patient's full first and last name
   ◦ Patient MRN
   ◦ Patient date of birth

4. Write the following additional information on the specimen label
   ◦ Collection date and time
   ◦ Initials of or identification of the collector or a laboratory tech code
   ◦ Source and/or site of specimen collection for all non-blood samples, including urine. If a paper requisition accompanies the specimen, it is acceptable (not preferred) to have this information on requisition instead of the specimen.

5. Perform the “Final Check” process:
   ◦ Remain at patient bedside with labeled specimen
   ◦ **Acute Care**: Read aloud the last three numbers of the MRN from the specimen sample and the patient's identification band
   ◦ **Outreach**: Read aloud the DOB from the specimen sample(s) and the patient's requisition.
   ◦ If patient or parent/guardian is able, ask them to verify the name on the sample

6. Ensure the following information is available to the lab electronically or on a paper requisition:
   ◦ Patient name
   ◦ Patient date of birth
   ◦ Patient address (when needed)
   ◦ Patient location
   ◦ Patient gender
   ◦ Provider full name
   ◦ Provider address (when needed)
   ◦ Tests required
   ◦ Last menstrual period (when needed for clinical interpretation on gynecological specimens)
   ◦ Clinical diagnosis

7. When a paper requisition is sent with the specimen, label the form with the patient identifiers to match those on the specimen. Paper requisitions are required:
   ◦ For Cytology & Pathology specimens
   ◦ Downtime/Non-interfaced orders

**Rejection Criteria for Laboratory Specimens:**

Laboratory specimens may be rejected for the following reasons:

1. The specimen does not have the required or correct two patient identifiers directly on the container.
   ◦ For **physician office or visiting nurse collected** specimens only: In instances of simple spelling or
letter/number transpositions in one of the two patient identifiers, the specimen may be accepted if the other patient identifier is correct and a third person-specific identifier, such as an address or social security number, can be verified or a patient is not listed in the computer system that matches the presumably transposed or misspelled information.

i. The laboratory staff contacts the pathologist on call for approval to accept the specimen for testing.

ii. The laboratory staff notifies the patient's physician or nurse of the specimen concern and informs them that the final results may be adversely affected. This is indicated in the final laboratory report.

iii. The laboratory staff corrects the error on the specimen and also writes their laboratory tech code and date.

iv. The laboratory staff completes an Unsatisfactory Specimen form and delivers the specimen affixed with a green "problem" sticker to the testing department.

   1. If needed for clinical reasons, the laboratory tests the specimen off line/as "run and hold". The laboratory obtains the information as soon as possible.

v. The testing area adds the appropriate comment including how it was re-labeled to the results at the time of reporting and returns the completed Unsatisfactory Specimen Form to their supervisor.

2. The following information is not available or obtainable:
   - Collection date
   - Collection time (when required for accurate results to be obtained, which includes, but is not limited to: blood, breast, urine and some microbiology samples)
   - Tests requested
   - Site and/or source for non-blood specimens
   - Other information that is required for an accurate result to be obtained

If the specimen is correctly labeled with two patient identifiers, but is missing any of the additional information which is required for valid results and/ or interpretation:

- **Specimens collected in the same building as the lab**: the laboratory staff makes one attempt to contact the individual responsible for the collection and labeling of the specimen. The clinician that collected the specimen comes to the laboratory to add the required information. If this is not possible, the laboratory rejects the specimen.

- **Specimens collected in a separate building as the lab**: the laboratory staff makes one attempt to contact the collection site/office to verbally obtain and complete the required information. If this is not possible, the laboratory rejects the specimen.

3. The specimen was not collected or handled in a manner that meets the pre-analytical requirements of the test being ordered (i.e.: improper collection tube).

4. The specimen is deemed unsatisfactory, which includes, but is not limited to:
   - Clotted for whole blood testing
   - Grossly hemolyzed serum/plasma
Contamination with IV fluids
Quantity not sufficient (QNS) for testing
Extremely lipemic specimen where clarification of sample will alter test result
Improperly filled containers (over-filled or under-filled) in which improper filling will alter results

5. Technical judgment by the laboratory staff, which may be based on previous results, deltas, etc., casts doubts on the specimen integrity or validity of the results.

**Rejection Procedure for Laboratory Specimens:**

If a specimen is rejected:

1. The laboratory staff notifies the collector and/or the patient's caregiver of the specimen rejection and requests that the specimen is recollected.
2. For electronic orders, the laboratory staff cancels the order in the Laboratory Information Systems (LIS) with the appropriate cancel comment and resubmits the order for blood specimens.
3. If necessary, the patient's caregiver notifies the phlebotomist of need and priority for redraw of blood specimen. The phlebotomist or caregiver re-collects the blood specimen.
4. The patient caregiver resubmits non-blood orders and re-collects the specimen.
5. The Laboratory holds the rejected specimen at the appropriate conditions and clearly labels the specimen as "rejected". Specimens may be discarded no sooner than 24 hours after receipt.

**Irreplaceable or Precious Specimens:**

1. Exceptions may be considered for irreplaceable or precious specimen types due to improper labeling, collection, handling if the extractable information may be of value.
2. The following samples are considered to be irreplaceable or precious specimens:
   - Normally sterile body fluid specimens (except blood), which may include, but is not limited to:
     - Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF)
     - Pleural fluid/Thoracentesis fluid
     - Peritoneal fluid/ascites/paracentesis fluid
     - Synovial fluid
     - Bronchoalveolar lavage
     - Pericardial fluid/pericardiocentesis fluid
   - Surgical specimens
   - Kidney stones
   - Bone marrow specimens
   - Gynecological specimens
   - Cysto and bladder washings
   - Meconium
   - 24 hour urine
   - Other specimens for which recollection will absolutely not reflect the original collection, or the sample
cannot be collected without high risk to the patient or a delay due to recollection could compromise patient care along with the pathologist on call's approval

3. The laboratory staff contacts the pathologist on call in order to accept the specimen for testing. If the approval is received:
   ◦ The laboratory staff discusses the specimen concern with the provider or nurse who collected the specimen. The lab also informs them that the final results may be adversely affected which is indicated in the final laboratory report.
   ◦ The caregiver refers to the business unit specific policy for disclosing events.
   ◦ The collecting individual comes to the lab to re-label the specimen within an agreed upon time frame.
     • For physician office or visiting nurse collected specimens: Alternative arrangements may be approved by the pathologist on call.
   ◦ The laboratory staff documents the collecting individual's full name on the Unsatisfactory Specimen Form. If the collecting provider or nurse fails to re-label the sample within the agreed upon time frame, the laboratory notifies the ordering provider and rejects the specimen.
   ◦ Laboratory staff delivers the specimen affixed with a green "problem" sticker to the testing department with the completed Unsatisfactory Specimen Form.
   ◦ If needed for clinical reasons, the laboratory tests the specimen off line/as "run and hold". The laboratory obtains the information as soon as possible.
   ◦ The laboratory staff adds the appropriate comment to the results at the time of reporting and returns the completed Unsatisfactory Specimen Form to their supervisor.

4. If the pathologist on call does not approve the request to proceed with testing, laboratory staff:
   ◦ Notifies the ordering provider of the specimen rejection
   ◦ Cancels the order in LIS with the appropriate cancel comment
   ◦ Completes the Unsatisfactory Specimen Form and returns it to department supervisor
   ◦ The laboratory holds the rejected specimen at the appropriate conditions and clearly labels the specimen as "rejected". Specimens may be discarded no sooner than 24 hours after receipt.

Attachments:

Image 01
ProMedica Laboratory - Specimen Acceptance and Rejection Process Flow Chart

Approval Signatures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approver</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laura Hamid: Support Coordinator IV - PCS</td>
<td>11/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaila Fernandes</td>
<td>07/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Matuszak</td>
<td>07/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Harr: Supervisor, Lab. Support Svc.</td>
<td>05/2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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