

DATE:	18 March 2024
TO:	South Zone Rural Health Centers
FROM:	South Zone Transfusion Medicine
RE:	Unpacking of Blood Transport Boxes After Laboratory Hours

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Key Message

- When an urgent or stat transport blood box is received after regular laboratory hours, the on-call laboratory staff member must be called to unpack the blood box. Nursing and/or Clinical staff should no longer unpack blood boxes received after laboratory hours.

Background

- Previously at some South Zone rural sites if a blood transport box was received after laboratory hours, clinical staff would unpack the units for transfusion. The Transfusion Medicine regulating bodies of Health Canada and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) require extensive education and direct observation competencies be performed for regulated activities such as the packing and unpacking of transport boxes containing blood components and blood products. To ensure compliance of these standards and appropriate quality assessment of the transported units or vials, Nursing and/or Clinical staff will no longer be requested to unpack transport boxes containing blood components or products.

Action Required

- If a transport box containing blood components or products is received and there is no laboratory staff member on site, ensure the on-call laboratory personnel is contacted to unpack the transport box.

Note: if the units in the transport box are not required for an urgent or stat transfusion, the laboratory staff member may delay the unpacking of the blood transport box until the next routine shift.

Blood transport boxes have been validated to maintain the appropriate storage temperature for 24 hours.

Effective **Immediately**

Questions/Concerns

- Kelsey Jakobsen, South Zone Transfusion Safety Officer
- Anita Scott, South Zone Regional Transfusion Medicine Technologist II

Approved by

- Tammy Katz, South Zone Rural Laboratory Manager
- Dr. Susan Nahirniak, Medical Director, APL Provincial Transfusion and Transplantation Medicine Program

Effective September 1, 2023, APL has become the sole provider of all public lab services in Alberta. As a result, community lab services formally provided by DynaLIFE Medical Labs will become the responsibility of Alberta Precision Labs (APL). This change impacts all zones.