

Date: August 22, 2011

To: All Physicians, All Nursing staff, Public Health, Infection Prevention & Control, Emergency Medical Services, Pharmacy Services, Respiratory Therapy, Diagnostic Imaging, Laboratory Managers and Directors

From: AHS Laboratory Services, Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab), Calgary Laboratory Services (CLS), Canadian Blood Services (CBS), Covenant Health, DynaLIFE_{Dx}, Medicine Hat Diagnostic Laboratory (MHDL)

Re: Reminder: Laboratory Policy - Acceptance of Laboratory Samples and Test Requests

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

- All Alberta laboratories have implemented a standardized provincial policy for consistent practice of sample acceptance for the province as of July 1, 2011.
- As a reminder, all clinical samples and test requests (requisitions) must have **two identifiers**:
 - Patient's full first and last name plus a unique identifier.
- In addition to the name and unique identifier, the provision of all information listed in the policy as "**other requested information**" is **also required** on the requisition in order to provide complete and accurate results. This includes:
 - Patient demographics (date of birth, gender, address/location, phone number)
 - Full name and complete address/location of physician/health care provider
 - Clear test/procedure orders
 - Date and time of collection

Why this is important:

- Complete information reduces potential risks to patient safety and quality of care and eliminates the need for problem solving of sample and test order discrepancies and deficiencies. This means reduced patient wait times at collection sites and faster turnaround times when processing patient samples. This also assures that samples are processed for the correct patient and results are sent to the correct provider/location as indicated on the test request (requisition).
- The provision of this information is a requirement as per the College of Physicians and Surgeons (CPSA) Laboratory Accreditation Standards.

Action Required:

- Ensure test requests (requisitions) are filled out completely and sample labeling matches exactly. All test requests (requisitions) and samples submitted to the Laboratory must meet defined criteria.
- Review the provincial sample acceptance criteria tables posted at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/lab/wf-lab-sample-acceptance-appendix-a-dec-2012nm.pdf>

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

Laboratory Client Services at 1-877-868-6848 or labclientservices@albertahealthservices.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

Ms. T. Hofer, Vice-President, AHS-Laboratory Services

Medical Scientific Directors for AHS Laboratory Services – Dr. Baskin, Dr. Louie, Dr. O'Hara & Dr. Wesenberg