

Date: January 27, 2012

To: South Zone – West: Public Health, Laboratories and Collection Sites

From: AHS Laboratory Services – South Zone (West)

Re: LBW-01-12 Handling of Public Health Specimens

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

Public Health specimens are currently being transported to Provincial Laboratory with environmental samples. This does not comply with Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations (TDG). Chinook Regional Hospital (CRH) Laboratory has daily specimen transport to Provincial Laboratory that complies with TDG regulations and can facilitate the transport of public health specimens. This change is effective February 1, 2012.

Action Required:

Specimens obtained by public health nurses in the community will be placed in a biohazard bag containing absorbent material and labelled with a pink "COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIMEN" label.

- Public Health specimens are ordered by the South Zone, Medical Officer of Health.
- Public Health specimens are typically nasopharyngeal swabs (school outbreak situations), stool (enteric outbreaks), sputum for TB. "EI" numbers are typically assigned to the specimens with the exception of TB specimens.

Samples may be dropped off at any South Zone West Rural Hospital Laboratory or Collection Site.

IF	THEN
Facility Outbreak Specimen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accession specimen • Enter EI number into comments if available • Create a shipping batch • Send specimen to CRH Data Centre
Community Specimen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do NOT Accession specimen • Send specimen to CRH Data Centre

- CRH Data Centre will place Facility specimens on a shipping batch for transport to Provincial Laboratory South.
- CRH Data Centre will place Community specimens in the transport box for Provincial Laboratory South

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

Barbara Collin, Data Centre Supervisor at 403-388-6109 or
Karen Thomas, South Zone CDC Coordinator at 403-388-6664

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by
Dr. B. Popma, Zone Clinical Department Head (Co-Lead) Laboratory Medicine, South Zone