

Date: October 30, 2012

To: South Zone – West
Physicians, Nursing Unit Managers, Laboratories and Collection Sites

From: AHS Laboratory Services – South Zone West

Re: Swabs for Anaerobic Culture

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

The optimal specimens for anaerobic culture are aspirated fluid/pus and tissue. A swab is not acceptable except when it's collected in the operating room with the Starswab Anaerobic Transport System. Remove the swab and insert into the wound. Once a sample is collected, insert the swab into the anaerobic transport tube, break the scored shaft of the swab and recap immediately.

Why this is important:

This approach represents the best practice if the use of a swab becomes necessary for collecting sample for anaerobes in the operating room. The integrity and ability to preserve anaerobes prior to arrival in laboratory is significantly improved. This approach also ensures better recovery of anaerobes in the laboratory.

Action Required:

Discontinue the use of (Starplex) regular pink top swab if anaerobic culture sample collection is clinically indicated in the operating room. The stores item number for the Starswab Anaerobic Transport System is 7012950.

For additional questions contact:

Remi Bolarinwa at 403-388-6108

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

LBW-16-12