

Date: June 18, 2012

To: South Zone - East: Nursing Managers, Pharmacy, Medicine Hat
Diagnostic Laboratory, Fran Pratt

From: AHS Laboratory Services – South Zone (East)

Re: Positive Blood Culture Reporting

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

Positive blood culture results have always been phoned as a critical lab result to wards on day shifts. In January 2012, the laboratory began notifying the wards of positive blood culture results on a 24 hour/day basis.

The preliminary report called to the ward will include Gram stain morphology of the organism found on the blood culture. Further identification and susceptibility results will follow as they become available, usually the next day.

Why this is important:

The finding of a positive blood culture is a critical laboratory result, which should be reported to the attending physician immediately. This notification is essential for optimal patient care. Failure to notify the physician may lead to delayed or inappropriate therapy for sepsis and adversely impact patient outcomes.

Action Required:

Nursing staff will be receiving preliminary positive blood culture results from the microbiology laboratory on a 24 hour/day basis. As with all other critical results, nursing should notify the attending physician immediately

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

Colleen Schaufele, Supervisor, Microbiology Lab by phone at 403-502-8648 (Ext 1202) or by email at Colleen.Schaufele@albertahealthservices.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:
Dr. Michael O'Connor, Zone Clinical Department Head (Co-Lead) Laboratory, South Zone