

June 2008

Documentation - Criteria for Acceptance of Patient Specimens

To Health Care Providers:

The Ontario Public Health Laboratories (OPHL) comply with the Ontario Laboratory Accreditation requirements for documentation that accompanies patient specimens for laboratory testing.

Complete the appropriate Public Health Laboratory requisition for each specimen submitted to the Laboratory. In addition to the general requisition, there are specific requisition forms for HIV and reference testing.

To improve turn around times and reduce errors, a separate specimen for each requested test is recommended.

Required Information

Effective June 25, 2008, the following is a list of requirements for the completion of requisition forms and labeling of specimens. Failure to comply with the following requirements may result in specimen rejection or delays in test results reporting.

On the Requisition Form

- **Submitter -**
 - Submitter's return address with postal code, telephone #, and secure fax #
 - Clinician's first and last name, OHIP billing number,
- **Patient Information -** *first name, *last name, date of birth, sex, *address and postal code, *health insurance number (HIN #), and Public Health Unit Outbreak number (if applicable)
 - *Optional for anonymous HIV testing
- **Test(s) Requested -** test(s) requested and type of specimen (e.g. nasopharyngeal, vaginal smear, blood or serum, etc.)

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- **Reason for Test** - date collected, date submitted, routine, follow up, symptomatic, asymptomatic, diagnostic, immunity, include other relevant clinical information.
 - For STAT, RUSH or ASAP samples, notify the laboratory that a priority sample will arrive. Deliver the specimen directly to the laboratory, not through the routine courier. Provide a call back number.

On the Specimen container –

Ontario Laboratory Accreditation requirements state:

V.C.2.3 “Each specimen shall be labeled at the time and point of collection with the patient’s full name (or unique code number in the case of anonymous testing), and one other unique identifier such as the admission/identification or accession number.”

- The specimen container is required to have the patient’s full name and the date of collection or other unique identifier. Due to space limitations, smears / slides may have patient’s initials and specific identifier on the frosted part of the slide.
- The information on the specimen must be the same as the name and other identifier on the OPHL requisition. Unmatched or mismatched specimens are not processed.

Transporting Samples to the Laboratory

Ensure the packaging type, documentation and transportation of all diagnostic specimens, cultures or biological products comply with the Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) Regulation in accordance with the latest addition of the National Standards of Canada CAN/CGSB-43.125.

For further information:

- Refer to the Specimen Collection Guide
<http://www.oahpp.ca/services/specimen-collection-guide.html>
- Call the OPHL HELPLINE at **1- 800 - 640 - 7221**