

Policies/Services

Billing

Douglas County Hospital Laboratory (DCHL) operates on a monthly billing cycle. Federal regulations require that hospitals bill directly for Medicare, Medicaid, and accept assignment of benefits. Please include the following information: patient's name, address, date of birth, sex, Social Security number, diagnosis code, Medicare/Medicaid number, and physician's name.

If DCHL is to bill an insurance company, please provide insurance name, policy number, patient's address, policy number, Social Security number, and the diagnosis code. Providing this information will avoid additional correspondence to your office at some later date.

All tests, not otherwise specified, will be billed to your facility.

Each month you will receive an itemized statement which includes the patient's name, test name, date of service, CPT codes, and test fees. All fees should be paid within 30 days to avoid late fees.

Fees for professional pathology services are billed separately by 7 Medical. Technical components of pathology services will be billed to you by DCHL.

Comparison Studies

DCHL will perform comparison studies at no charge with prior approval. Submit all specimens at once identified by number, not patient name, accompanied by one DCHL test requisition stating "For Comparison." Alternatively (preferred), call DCHL to save specimens to send for comparisons at your facility.

Confidentially of Results

DCHL is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of patient information. All activities by DCHL personnel with respect to protected healthcare information will be handled in a manner compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Consultation

A client service representative (CSR) is available to you to coordinate a complete program of laboratory services especially designed to meet your needs. The CSR will assist you in meeting certification requirements and to provide ongoing professional guidance. Services available include pipet calibration, thermometer checks, and centrifuge/tachometer checks. Routine visits may be established, as well as single visits for special requests. The fee for these services is \$30.00 per hour, or \$60.00 per month.

Courier Service

DCHL provides courier service on a daily basis Monday through Friday. (No courier services are available on holidays. Notices will be sent prior to these dates.) The courier has the capability of keeping specimens in a refrigerated or frozen state as required for optimal specimen integrity. A fee will be charged for use of the DCHL courier to deliver items other than to DCHL.

Patient Identification Accuracy

Proper specimen identification is of utmost importance for good patient care. Regulations state that specimens lacking proper identification should not be accepted. Two identifiers are required on the specimen: patient name and second unique identifier: (e.g. medical record number or date of birth). DCHL will not process unlabeled specimens. Upon receipt of an unlabeled specimen, DCHL will notify your facility via the [Specimen Discrepancy Notice](#), and the specimen will be discarded. Exceptions include irretrievable specimens such as body fluids, surgical specimens, cord bloods, timed tests, and difficult to collect specimens.

It is important that each specimen be properly labeled with the same demographic information on the specimen as on the requisition. Improperly labeled specimens will be returned upon request, accompanied by the [Specimen Discrepancy Notice](#). This form is used for improperly labeled and incorrect specimens.

Reference Laboratory

Mayo Medical Laboratories is the primary reference lab DCHL uses for those assays not performed in-house and for pathology consult services.

Supplies

DCHL provides its clients with specimen collection and transportation items at no charge for those specimens sent to DCHL. These include cytology specimen supplies, ova and parasite collection kits, request slips, serum tubes, specialized transport medias, and transport bags.

Other items may also be ordered for a fee. These include, but are not limited to: microbiology media and butterfly needles.

To order supplies, fill out a [Supply Request Form](#) or fax your order. Supplies will be delivered via courier.

Test Cancellations/Add-Ons/Verbal Orders

Cancellation requests received prior to test set-up will be honored at no charge. Requests received following test set-up cannot be honored. A report will be issued and charged appropriately.

When tests are added on verbally or performed if indicated, a [Verbal Order Authorization](#) form will be faxed to your facility. The indicated tests are listed with CPT codes and fees. Authorized personnel at your facility must then sign and date the form and return it by fax to DCHL.

Test Turnaround Time

This catalog lists the days on which the test is set up as a guide to expected turnaround times. Results of tests requested ASAP or STAT will be faxed or telephoned to your facility, in a timely manner, the same day the test is completed. Tests requested as routine will be reported back to the physician the morning after the test is completed. Repeated tests take additional time. Interfaced reports are transmitted as soon as they are verified.

Unacceptable Specimens

Some specimens cannot be analyzed because of improper collection or degradation in transit. Other specimens may have prolonged turnaround times because of lack of necessary ancillary specimens or patient information.

You will be notified of rejected or problem specimens upon receipt. To avoid rejection, use the following checklist to ensure specimen conditions are correct:

- Full 24 hours for timed urine collection
- Lack of hemolysis
- Patient information requested
- Patient/specimen properly identified
- pH of urine
- Specimen container (metal-free, separation gel, sterile, etc.)
- Specimen type (plasma, serum, whole blood, etc.)
- Specimen volume
- Temperature (ambient, refrigerated, frozen)
- Transport medium

Note: Send separate specimens if varying transport temperatures or if specimens are going to separate laboratories (ie, Mayo, DCHL).