**Animal Specimens**
We do not accept animal specimens for laboratory testing.

**Cancellation of Tests**
Cancellations received prior to test setup will be honored at no charge. Requests for cancellation received following test setup cannot be honored. A report will be issued automatically and charged appropriately.

**Chain-of-Custody**
MMC offers legal testing that requires a chain-of-custody to be completed. Please call our laboratory at 814-534-5227 prior to sending any blood or urine for legal testing.

**Disclosure of Results**
Under federal regulations, we are only authorized to release results to ordering physicians or other health care providers responsible for the individual patient’s care. Third parties requesting results, including requests directly from the patient, are directed to Health Information Systems.

**Framework for Quality**
“Framework for Quality” is the foundation for the development and implementation of the quality program for MMC. Our framework builds upon the concepts of quality control and quality assurance providing an opportunity to deliver consistent, high-quality, and cost-effective service to our clients. In addition, our quality program enhances our ability to meet and exceed the requirements of regulatory/accreditation agencies and provide quality service to our customers.

A core principle at MMC is the continuous improvement of all processes and services that support the care of patients. Our continuous improvement process focuses on meeting the needs of you, our client, to help you serve your patients.

“Framework for Quality” is composed of “Quality System Essentials.” The policies, processes, and procedures associated with the “Quality System Essentials” can be applied to all operations in the path of workflow (e.g., pre-analytical, analytical, and post-analytical). Performance is measured through constant monitoring of activities in the path of workflow and comparing performance through benchmarking internal and external quality indicators and proficiency testing.

Data generated by quality indicators drives process improvement initiatives to seek resolutions to system-wide problems. MMC utilizes “Failure Modes and Effects Analysis (FMEA),” “Plan Do Study Act (PDSA),” “LEAN,” “Root Cause Analysis,” and “Six Sigma” quality improvement tools to determine appropriate remedial, corrective, and preventive actions.

The review and analysis of indicator data is focused on recognizing and reducing variability in our processes, identifying systematic problems, and improving critical processes. The following metrics are just a few of the key performance indicators used to monitor performance and customer satisfaction:

- **Pre-analytic**
  - Lost specimens
  - On-time delivery
  - Specimen acceptability
  - Specimen identification
- **Analytic**
  - Turnaround time
  - Proficiency testing
- **Post-analytic**
  - Revised reports
  - Critical value notification
- **Customer Service**
  - Customer complaints
  - Customer satisfaction surveys

**HIPAA Compliance/Confidentiality**
MMC is fully committed to compliance with all privacy, security, and electronic transaction code requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Workforce compliance is continuously monitored. Training is conducted annually.

**Physician Orders**
All testing for MMC must be authorized with a proper physician order. The order must include:

- Patient name
- Date
- Diagnosis necessitating the testing
- Diagnostic test to be performed
- Ordering physician’s signature

Certain testing requires informed consent certification from the patient or family. This testing includes but is not limited to: autopsy, HIV, and genetic testing. Direct-to-consumer testing is not performed at MMC.
Proficiency Testing
We are a College of American Pathologists (CAP)-accredited, Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA)-licensed facility that voluntarily participates in many diverse external and internal proficiency testing programs. We conduct internal assessments to ensure the accuracy and reliability of patient testing when external proficiency is not available.

Quality Assurance
Quality processes, products, and people are critical to MMC providing clinicians with the highest quality test results. We are committed to providing the highest quality of care and service in accordance with Conemaugh Health System’s vision “Excellence, Every Patient, Every Time.” The quality system is organized to monitor processes and operations through the performance of self-assessment audits, error management, and customer feedback. By conforming to regulatory standards, Food and Drug Administration and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, we abide by the law. By conforming to requirements for accreditation, we adhere to the high standards for quality established by the Joint Commission, AABB (Formerly American Association of Blood Banks), CAP, and other peer-review organizations. By conforming to our customer’s standards, we practice the philosophy of continuous quality improvement.

Radioactive Specimens
For the safety and well-being of MMC staff, specimens from patients receiving radioactive tracers or material should be labeled as such.

Reflex Testing
MMC reflexes testing when medically appropriate. These tests are reviewed and approved annually by our medical staff.

Reportable Disease
MMC reports electronically all results listed in 28 PA code, chapter 27, subchapter B through an electronic disease surveillance system (NEDSS). NEDSS is Pennsylvania’s electronic disease reporting forum, which is driven by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to ensure timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of patient data.

Specimen Identification
MMC’s policy states that all specimens received for testing must be correctly and adequately labeled to assure positive identification. Specimens must have 2 person-specific identifiers on the patient label. Person-specific identifiers may include: accession number, patient’s first and last name, unique identifying number (eg, medical record number), and/or date of birth. Specimens are considered mislabeled when there is a mismatch between the person-specific identifiers on the specimen and information accompanying the specimen (eg, computer system, requisition form, or additional paperwork). When insufficient or inconsistent identification is submitted, MMC will recommend that a new specimen be obtained, if feasible.

Specimen Rejection
Specimens will not be rejected without appropriate efforts to resolve any issues. If an error exists with patient identification or labeling, best practice is to recollect the specimen. In certain situations, recollection is not practical. These include:

- Invasive fluid collections
- Outreach specimens
- Anatomic pathology specimens
- Any specimen that is impossible or difficult to recollect

If an unacceptable specimen is processed, a comment will accompany the result(s) indicating there was an issue. If a specimen is lost, destroyed, or a resolution cannot be found, you will be notified as soon as possible.

Specimen Volume
The “Specimen Required” section of each test includes a minimum volume. Full tubes allow the laboratory to quickly process specimen containers, present containers to instruments, perform test, and repeat test, if necessary. Many of our testing processes are fully automated. As a result, this volume allows hands-free testing and our quickest turnaround time (TAT). Since patient values are frequently abnormal, repeat testing, dilutions, or other specimen manipulations often are required to obtain a reliable, reportable result. Full tubes allow expeditious testing and reporting.

When venipuncture is technically difficult or the patient is at risk of complications from blood loss (eg, pediatric or intensive care patients), smaller volumes may be necessary. Specimen minimum volume is the amount required to perform an assay once, including instrument and container dead space. When patient conditions do not mandate reduced collection volumes, we ask that our clients submit full tubes to facilitate rapid, cost-effective, reliable test results. Submitting less than preferred volume may negatively impact quality of care by slowing TAT, increasing the hands-on personnel time (and therefore cost) required to perform test.
MMC makes every possible effort to successfully test your patient’s specimen. If you have concerns about submitting a specimen for testing, please call Memorial Medical Center Laboratory at 814-534-5227.

**Supplies**

MMC Lab supplies equipment necessary for the successful submission of specimens. Supplies can be requested by faxing a “Clinical Laboratory Items Order Form” to 814-534-6130. Supplies will be delivered via MMC’s courier service.

**Turnaround Time (TAT)**

MMC’s test menu reflects the needs of our own health care practice. We are committed to providing the most expedient TAT possible to improve diagnosis and treatment. We consider laboratory services as part of the patient care continuum wherein the needs of the patient are of utmost importance. TAT is continuously monitored at MMC Laboratory.

**Unlisted Tests**

MMC continuously reviews our test menu to ensure we offer testing that ensures proper patient care; therefore, some tests are not listed in this catalog. Please direct any questions about testing to our laboratory at 814-534-5227.