

Zero Tolerance Specimen Labeling



ZERO TOLERANCE SPECIMEN LABELING

- I **Purpose:** To minimize patient safety risk and maximize patient satisfaction, all specimens must be labeled correctly when collected. This positive patient identification:
 - A Prevents the need for re-collection, thus minimizing the safety risk of another collection.
 - B Maximizes patient quality of care and provider satisfaction of not having to collect another specimen.
 - C Reduces the potential for mismatching specimen and patient in the laboratory.
 - D Eliminates inefficiencies of having to track a poorly labeled specimen for proper identification.

- II **Scope:**
 - A All specimens
 - B All staff who collect and submit patient specimens to the laboratory

- III **Specimens:** All specimens

- IV **Materials and/or Equipment Needed:** Laboratory Specimen Information Correction/Rejection Report

- V **Procedure:**
 - A Verify patient identification (full name and one unique identifier of birthdate or medical record number).
 - B Specimen labels require accurate and legible patient identification with a minimum of **full first and last name** and at least one unique identifier on the label (date of birth, medical record number, or social security number). **Whenever possible, label the containers for blood and other samples in the presence of the patient.**
 - C Specimen label must be on the specimen container (not lid).
 - D Specimen label must exactly match the identification and unique identifier on the requisition.
 - E The following will be rejected:
 - 1 **Unlabeled specimens**
 - a No patient identification directly on specimen.
 - b Labeling of plastic bag containing the specimen container.
 - c Labeling of specimen container lid.
 - 2 **Incomplete identification of specimen**
 - a Identification without full first and full last name.
 - b Name without at least one unique identifier
 - 3 **Mislabeled specimens**
 - a Name or unique identifier on specimen does not exactly match name or unique identifier on requisition.
 - 4 **Miscellaneous required information per specific laboratory department missing** (refer to Laboratory Specimen Labeling Policy).
 - a Blood Bank numbers
 - b Anatomical locations including left and right
 - c Specimens too long in transport



- F Upon receipt of mislabeled/unlabeled specimen:
 - 1 Laboratory will notify submitting department or client and explain what the discrepancy is and that the specimen will be rejected.
 - 2 Request new specimen with a new order/requisition
 - 3 Accession specimen in LIS and attach a "Rejected Specimen" order for clinical or micro.
 - 4 Cancel original order in laboratory LIS
 - 5 Enter the Review Results field in LIS. Under status, choose Rejected Specimen and enter appropriate comments in the test results fields. Include the name of the person who was notified of the rejection including date and time. Approve.
 - 6 Place specimen in the Rejected Specimen Rack at the appropriate storage temperature in client services.

VI Exceptions to the Policy:

- A Accepting an improperly labeled specimen may be permissible when staff cannot reasonably collect it again or when a rejection would result in significant treatment delay.
- B Department or client who submitted the specimen will be notified by phone of the labeling problem. It is the department or client's responsibility to notify the correct provider of the specimen labeling discrepancy.
- C Laboratory will save the specimen and fill out the top portion of a Specimen Information Correction/Rejection report form and fax to the department or client responsible who submitted that specimen.
- D Responsible department or client will fill out the bottom portion of the faxed Specimen Information Correction/Rejection Report, sign, and fax back to Rice Laboratory.
- E When form is completed and faxed back to the laboratory, staff will continue processing that specimen and will make a comment about the specimen labeling on the final report.
- F Emergency- if no patient identification is available the unidentified patient is given a numbered arm bracelet and all requisition forms and specimens are identified by that number until identification is possible.
- G Steps to take if a client requests to have the identity of a received sample changed:
 - 1 Let the client know you will be sending them a Correction/Rejection form to be filled out and that it needs to be filled out completely in order to have the report modified.
 - 2 Fill out the details of the correction from the Rice Laboratory standpoint.
 - 3 Fax the Correction/Rejection form to the client to be completed and signed.
 - 4 Once the form is received back at Rice Laboratory, have the LIS specialist transfer the patient data or change the demographic information to issue a new report.
 - 5 Scan and attach a copy of the completed Correction/Rejection form to the patient sample following the scanning protocol for patient results.
 - 6 In Harvest, add a comment to the specimen; "This specimen was received under questionable identification circumstances. The originating entity has requested that Rice Laboratory change the original demographic information. Please see the attached correction form for details." You may use the Harvest shortcut "/wrong pt id" to add this comment. Please enter the comment in Harvest at the order level by clicking on comments and selecting the Sample ID tab.
 - 7 Route the corrected report to the appropriate location following standard protocol. If the client is a Copia user, the LIS specialist should be able to route an electronic report back to the client inbox in Copia.



VII Results that need to be erased from patient records (This procedure to be carried out by LIS staff)

- A There may be circumstances where completed patient results have to be deleted from his/her permanent record. An example may be where an outreach client calls after results have been received and they discover the sample was labeled with the wrong patient's demographics. The outreach client then wishes to have all results deleted out of the patient's record.
- B The following steps must be followed in order to erase results from incorrect patient's record, but keep results in our system:
 - 1 Order a Comment in Copia under patient that incorrect specimen is under. Release and result the comment in Harvest.
 - a An example Comment result: Received phone call from *client name, date, and time* stating that *specimen type* result on patient name was not the correct patient. Moved result over to Incorrect Patient file in Copia and Harvest in order to get results out of patient history. *Facility name* will collect and order on correct patient in the future. *Tech initials*
 - 2 Move the incorrect order to Patient, Incorrect in both Copia and Harvest.
 - 3 Print labels out of Harvest with the name Patient, Incorrect on them and attach to requisition and sample(s) that were labeled incorrectly. Initial patient labels.
- C Fill out a Quality Improvement Form with details from the situation and route appropriately.

VII References:

- C Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)
- D Laboratory Compliance Insider, October 2005