Sample Transport Procedures for the Community

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1 Scope

This document describes the procedures for transporting specimens to Barnsley & Rotherham Pathology Services from community premises or any other off-site location.

2 Introduction

Pathology specimens are potentially infectious and hazardous. Care must therefore be taken to package and transport specimens in compliance with the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR 2013) to minimise the risks to staff, couriers and the general public. The collection and transportation of specimens is also important in ensuring the quality of results.

3 Provision of Transport Services

The collection and transportation of pathology samples for Barnsley & Rotherham Pathology Services is provided by Courier Logistics Ltd (CL). This is a dedicated service and aims to promote sample integrity by guaranteeing a maximum journey time of 2 hours. All drivers have received specific training in the handling of pathological specimens and CL have performed risk assessments for all locations receiving a collection service.

4 References

European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR 2013)

5 Individual Specimen Collection & Packaging

5.1 Danger of Infection labels

When packaging any individual specimens from patients known to have a blood borne virus or CJD, please attach a ‘danger of infection’ label to both the specimen bottles and request form - this ensures safe handling and disposal of the specimens. **NB. These specimens DO NOT need to be transported separately**

5.2 ICE Ordercomms requests/specimens

All samples must be placed in the correct plastic pocket. Remove the brown self adhesive tape to reveal the glued area, and then fold along the perforations so the glued area attaches to the plastic and securely seals the specimen bag.

Remove second brown self adhesive tape and attach the specimen bag to the top section of the ICE ORDERCOMMS request form.

**NB. Use GREEN plastic pocket for Chemistry and Haematology specimens (Marked Blood Sciences specimens only)**

**Use YELLOW plastic pocket is for Microbiology specimens (Marked Microbiology specimens only).**

5.3 Blood Transfusion specimens
All samples must be placed in the CLEAR plastic pocket attached to the blood transfusion request form. Remove the brown self adhesive tape to reveal the glued area, and then fold along the perforations so the glued area attaches to the plastic and securely seals the specimen bag.

5.4 Cellular Pathology specimens

All samples must be placed in the CLEAR plastic pocket attached to the Cellular Pathology request form. Remove the brown self adhesive tape to reveal the glued area, and then fold along the perforations so the glued area attaches to the plastic and securely seals the specimen bag.

5.5 Liquid Based Cytology specimens

Liquid Based Cytology Samples must be placed in the plastic pocket attached to the cytology request stationery. (These specimen bags are provided by Sheffield Teaching Hospitals). Please ensure that the cervex brush is placed in the sample vial. Remove the brown self adhesive tape to reveal the glued area, and then fold along the perforations so the glued area attaches to the plastic and securely seals the specimen bag.

6 Transportation of Specimens to the Laboratory

6.1 General Information

Prior to collection, all individually packaged specimens must be placed in a large white secondary transport bag (NB. Cytology specimens should be placed in a GREEN secondary transport bag provided by Sheffield Teaching Hospitals. Microbiology specimens from Family Planning should be placed in a PURPLE secondary transport bag).

All secondary transport bags contain a large sheet of absorbent material to contain the specimen in the event of leakage – please DO NOT discard this. The secondary bags must be sealed and placed within a GREEN ‘drop tested’ Versapak transport case. The Versapak cases are labelled “Diagnostic Substances UN3373 – Private and Confidential”. These must be fully zip fastened before leaving the remote site, and kept closed until receipt by Pathology reception staff.

NB. The green Versapak transport cases must only be used for the transport of Pathology specimens. If mail or any other goods are delivered via specimen transport runs, they must be kept totally separate.

6.2 Cytology specimens

All samples must be placed in the large GREEN secondary transport bag provided by Sheffield Teaching Hospitals. NB. Only use these bags for LBC specimens – do not use for any other Pathology specimens. These bags must be sealed and transported in a Versapak transport case to Pathology prior to onward dispatch to the Royal Hallamshire Hospital.
6.3 Centrifuged samples

All centrifuged, capped aliquots of serum must be placed upright in supplied racks. The racks must be sealed within a large **WHITE** specimen transport bag containing absorbent material. This must then be transported to Pathology within a sealed Versapak transport case.

6.4 24 hour urine specimens

Red 30 litre Diagnostic Specimen Containers (see right) must be used exclusively for 24 hour urine transportation. Absorbent material must be present at the bottom of the container - **please do not remove**. Ensure the top of the urine collection bottle is secured, and seal in a green secondary transport bag. Place this in the 30 litre Diagnostic Specimen container ensuring the lid is securely fastened.

7 Specimen Delays

All specimens must be transported to the laboratory on the day they are taken. DELAYS in specimen transportation due to adverse weather conditions may affect the integrity of the sample and lead to unreliable results.

7.1 Chemical Pathology

All Chemical Pathology gel tube sample tests will be affected. Samples delayed over 12 hours cannot be processed. Blood Glucose specimens in fluoride tubes and HbA1C specimens in EDTA tubes may be stored in a refrigerator overnight.

7.2 Haematology

Full blood count specimens in EDTA tubes may be stored in a refrigerator overnight.

7.3 Microbiology

All urine, swabs etc may be stored in a refrigerator overnight.

7.4 Histopathology

Specimens may be stored overnight at room temperature.
8  Transportation Incidents

Any incidents relating to the transportation of specimens must be reported to Pathology Reception (01226 43) 2727 for advice immediately. Examples of such incidents include spillages, delays in delivery and problems satisfying packaging requirements.