Scope

The procedure ensures the proper receipt and processing of patient samples, and it applies to all laboratory staff.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to explain the criteria for accepting or rejecting samples for laboratory testing.

Definitions

Requisition: Refers to test orders, may be electronic or on paper.

Unlabeled sample: Sample container is not labeled with a minimum of 2 unique patient identifiers.

Incomplete requisition: requisition is missing information such as-

- Patient identity, age, or gender
- Sample source
- Ordering physician
- Collection time and date
- Billing information (when appropriate)

Unsatisfactory samples for testing include but not limited to:

- Unlabeled or incompletely labeled samples
    - Blood samples
        - Minimum acceptable sample identification data to include:
            - Patient name: Last name and first name
            - Patient date of birth or unique patient number
            - Time and date of collection
            - Collector's initials or identification number
- Missing or incomplete requisition
- Samples and requisition mismatch
- Sample not handled properly (ie. in collection, storage or shipping)
- Sample container damaged or unsuitable
- Sample not collected at the proper time
- Insufficient sample for testing
- Hemolysis, icterus or lipemia of samples for certain tests

Table 1.1: Major and Minor Deficiency Definitions

TYPE	NAME IDENTIFIER	UNIQUE IDENTIFIER	OTHER
MAJOR	- Identifier missing (unlabelled) - Incomplete name, e.g. first or last name missing, initials only - First or last name completely different between sample and test request - Significant misspelling where more than 2 letters are transposed; or missing or added letters that change the interpretation of the name, e.g. Olliver vs Over	- Identifier missing - Identifier on test request and sample do not match - Numbers incorrect or missing from identifier	- "Standard Requirements" defined for requisition and sample labelling and/or acceptance criteria not met - Test request received without a corresponding sample or sample received and no test request is available
MINOR	- Use of nicknames, abbreviations, derivative names, middle name - Insignificant spelling discrepancy where there is a simple transposition of letters, one letter added or missing that does not change the interpretation of the name, e.g. Michael vs. Micheal. - Spelling is correct, but order of names is inconsistent - Apostrophe or space discrepancy, e.g. Obrien vs. O'Brien or Saddleback vs. Saddle Back		- "Other Requested Information" defined for requisition not met (e.g. requestor location not provided, gender incorrect, etc.) or discrepancy between the requisition and sample of between the test request and sample or between the test request and Lab Information System - Time of collection missing on sample and deemed necessary for accurate test reporting

	- Maiden name vs. married last name as long as names can be reconciled - Temporary baby name changed to permanent name		

Responsibilities

The Quality Manager is responsible for developing sample rejection and acceptance criteria policies, which are authorized by the Laboratory Director.

Laboratory staff is responsible for adhering to the policies of sample rejection and acceptance.

Guidelines to Rejection

Initial tasks upon receipt of patient sample

- Document date and time the sample was received
- Assign an accession number to be used as sample identification in the laboratory
- Verify that the patient identification on the requisition matches the identification on the sample
- Examine the sample visually to evaluate for acceptability
- Review and evaluate the test request for suitability of the type of sample collected
- Determine the suitability, with respect to the test(s) ordered, of the transport conditions, including the following:
    - Transport medium for the sample
    - Temperature of sample upon receipt
    - Length of time between the sample collection and receipt
    - Transport container intact, i.e. no leaks or cracks

Requisition required information

The requisition must include the following:

- Complete patient identification
- Patient contact information
- Date and time of collection
- Tests requested
- Name and contact information of requesting physician or other medical provider

Examples of sample rejection criteria

- Unlabeled or mislabelled samples (see definition of unsatisfactory samples for details)

- Leaky containers
- Contaminated samples
- Inappropriate sample sources
- Delayed transport time and sample processing

General Rejection Criteria

Unlabelled Specimens

- Unlabelled specimens are considered to be major deficiencies
- Common specimen types (blood, urine, swabs, stool, etc.) which can be easily recollected and cannot with certainty be identified, will require recollection

Incorrectly Labelled Specimens

- Mislabelled specimens may be major or minor deficiencies
- Specimen which are labelled with the wrong patient's name compared to that of the accompanying requisition or with a different patient ID number is under the same criteria for Unlabelled Specimens.
- Correction must be made before acceptance of specimens
- Minor deficiencies may be accepted, and tests ordered will be performed

Incorrect container or preservative

- Specimens received in an incorrect container, or without appropriate preservative, which would invalidate the results, will require recollection.

Insufficient Specimen for procedure

- If insufficient specimen is received for all procedures requested and the specimen can be easily recollected, a repeat collection will be requested. Procedures for which there is sufficient specimen will be performed.

Unsuitable Specimen for procedure

- Specimens which are received and are unsuitable for the procedure requested or if the specimen has been in transit for too long for a valid result, the specimen will be rejected. The collection site will be informed so a proper specimen can be collected.

Rejection Procedure

This procedure outlines the process used to identify a specimen as unsuitable for testing. It provides the process for specimen rejection and lists the comment codes reported against rejection tests.
Rejection criteria:

A. ***Specimen integrity*:**
Age of specimen
Incorrect container used
Specimen is hemolyzed, clotted, etc.
Insufficient specimen to perform testing

B. ***Specimen identification:***
Sample is unlabelled
Sample is not labelled with at least two positive patient identifiers, mislabeled or illegibly labeled.
An incomplete requisition including date and time of collection
Sample not accompanied with a complete requisition
Sample identity does not positively correlate with the requisition

C. ***Specimen handling*:**
Sample not transported under the correct conditions
Sample not stored in the proper requirements
Blood sample not collected in the correct order of draw
Sample pose a possibility of contamination
Sample leaking
Exterior of container is grossly contaminated with the sample

1. Document the reason(s) for rejecting a specimen.
2. Notify the authorized person promptly by telephone or electronically. Provide feedback on sample quality to the sample collector.
3. Ask the authorized person to complete mislabeled specimen waiver: PRE-FO-0003 Mislabelled Specimen Form if the specimen is to be re-labelled by Olive Staff.
4. Maintain records of efforts to resolve problems and all associated documents.
5. Maintain a written or electronic specimen rejection log.
6. Store rejected specimen properly prior to problem resolution/rejection/disposal.

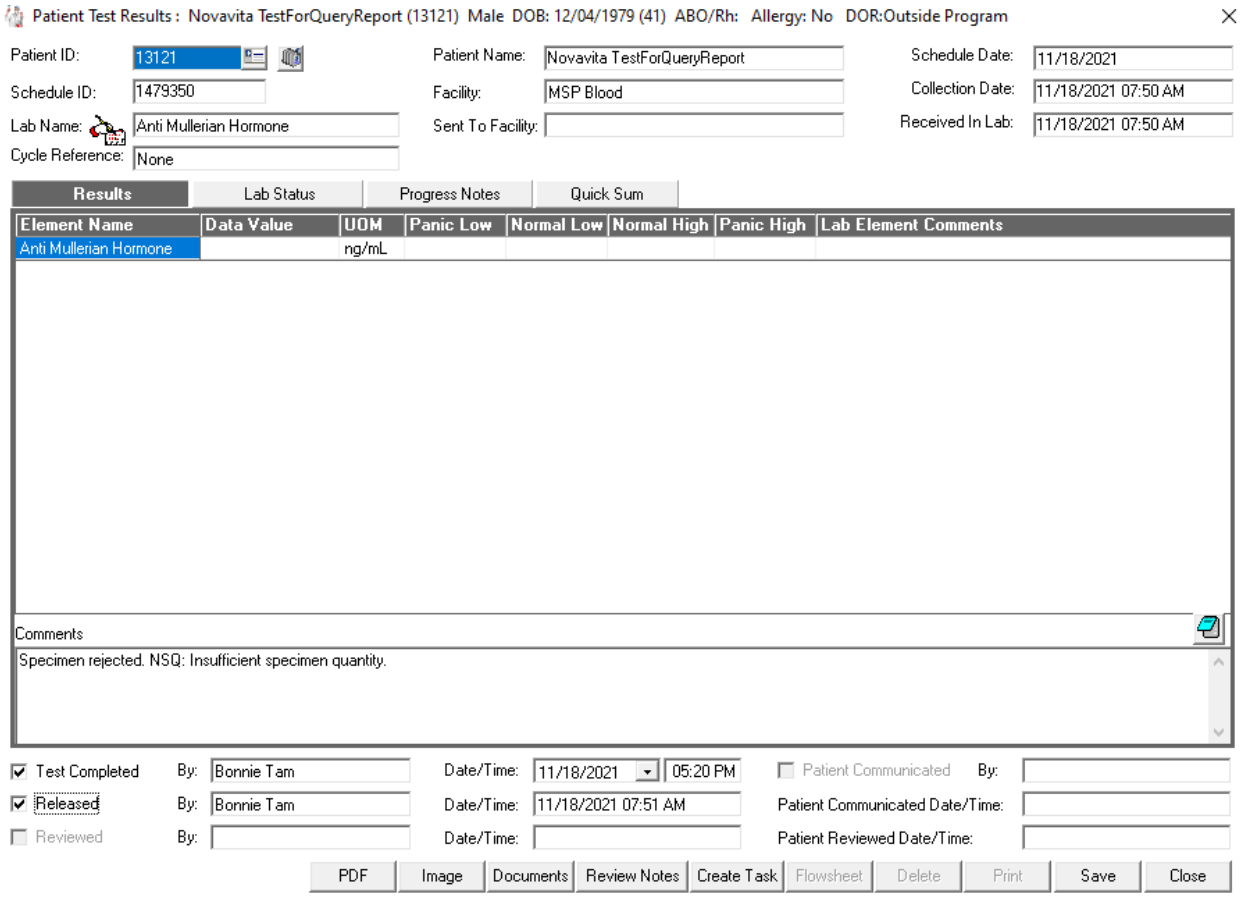
Documentation

The technologist must document specimens that do not meet the acceptance criteria. On the Sample Rejection Log, rejection trends are monitored to determine the need for a review of pre-examination processes and collector education. A rejection comment and code must be entered in the comment section of the final report. Please see example below.

Rejection Codes

CODE	Problem	CODE	Problem
CLTD	Specimen clotted	UNAC	Specimen unacceptable
ULSP	Unlabelled Specimen	NSR	No Specimen Received
SIC	Incorrect Specimen Container	IMSP	Wrong tube/Specimen type
NSQ	Insufficient Specimen Quantity	NOTP	Test not performed due to…
BROK	Specimen container broke in Transit	LOST	Specimen lost in Transit
SLIP	Slight lipemia. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.	SHEM	Slight hemolysis. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.
MLIP	Moderate lipemia. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.	MHEM	Moderate hemolysis. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.
GLIP	Gross lipemia. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.	GHEM	Gross hemolysis. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.
SICT	Slight icterus. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.	GICT	Gross icterus. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.
MICT	Moderate icterus. Results may be affected. Please interpret with caution.		

Example



Related Documents

Procedures/Forms
PRE-PR-0003 Patient Identification
PRE-FO-0002 Sample Rejection Log
PRE-FO-0003 Mislabelled Specimen Form
PRE-JA-0002 Rejection Codes Table

Reference

1. “Acceptance Criteria for Specimens and Test Requests.” Major and Minor Deficiency Definitions, www.calgarylabservices.com/medical-professionals/specimen-acceptance/DeficiencyDefinitions.aspx.
2. “Sample rejection or acceptance procedure”. Strengthening health security by implementing the International Health Regulations. World health organization, 2005. http://www.who.int/entity/ihr/training/laboratory_quality/Ap9_Sample_acceptance.doc?ua=1

Prepared by: Bonnie Tam

Approved By:

Medical Approval		
Dr. Renison Chongkit		January 2, 2015
Name	Signature	Date

Management Approval		
Bonnie Tam		January 2, 2015
Name	Signature	Date

Record of Revisions

Version	Date of Revision/Review	Responsible Person	Revision Description	Signature of Approval
1.0	Jan 28, 2018	BT	Added General Rejection Criteria	
1.0	Jan 15, 2019	BT	Annual Review	
1.0	Jan 6, 2020	BC	Annual Review	Barry Coligado
1.1	Nov 18, 2021	BT	Format update, addition of rejection comments