



Collecting and Transporting Laboratory Specimens Procedure

Procedure Number
WCDHB-PN-0055

Version Nos:
4

1. Purpose

This Procedure is performed as a means of obtaining and transporting specimens for Laboratory analysis, and to ensure that this occurs in a safe and prompt manner.

2. Application

This Procedure is to be followed by all nursing staff throughout the West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB).

3. Definitions

Universal Precautions: an approach to infection control designed to prevent transmission of blood borne diseases.

4. Staff Authorised To Perform Procedure

This Procedure shall be performed by a:

- i) registered nurse (RN); or
- ii) enrolled nurse / nurse assistant; or
- iii) student nurse (under RN direction).

NOTE: Orderlies and Ward Clerks may transport specimens to the Laboratory providing they are already labelled and placed inside an appropriate Bio Hazard bag.

5. Resources Required

This Procedure requires:

- i) appropriate leak-proof container
- ii) Gloves – non sterile
- iii) Disposable apron
- iv) Bio Hazard bag
- v) Laboratory Specimen Requisition Form
- vi) additional equipment depending on Procedure required to obtain specimen and standard precaution

6. Process

- 1.00 Correctly identify patient.
- 1.01 Apply gloves and apron
- 1.02 Obtain informed consent from patient.



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- 1.03 Explain Procedure to patient.
- 1.04 Ensure privacy of patient by closing curtains around bed or closing door to room.
- 1.05 Assemble equipment.
- 1.06 Obtain the specimen using standard precautions.
- 1.07 Correctly label the specimen container (by hand) with the patient's name, identification number, source of the specimen, date, time of collection and patient location.
- 1.08 Remove gloves and apron
- 1.07 Check that container into which specimen is placed is leak-proof. Place container inside Bio-Hazard bag. Place lab form in outside pocket of Bio-Hazard Bag.
- 1.09 Place Bio-Hazard bag inside container for transport to Laboratory. Container must have separate compartment for Laboratory Specimen Requisition Form.
- 1.10 Arrange for the specimen to be promptly transported to the Laboratory.
- 1.11 During the hours of 08.30 to 16.30 weekdays the specimens are to be left with the Laboratory Receptionist (in Greymouth) and in appropriate storage areas elsewhere.
- 1.12 **GREYMOUTH ONLY:** After hours and at weekends specimens are to be left in the specimen fridge in the Laboratory corridor. Blood cultures must be left in the blood culture incubator which is located in the laboratory reception area. Blood gases must be given directly to Laboratory staff (as they need to be analysed immediately).
- 1.13 For after hours and weekends specimens, notify the receptionist who will notify the appropriate Laboratory staff.
- 1.14 Document the Procedure stating in the patient's clinical record.

7. Precautions And Considerations

- ➔ No needles or sharps are to be sent with the specimen
- ➔ Ensure specimen is correctly identified
- ➔ Ensure specimen is transported to Laboratory in Bio-Hazard bag
- ➔ Specimens must be transported to the Laboratory as soon as possible after collection.
- ➔ Always observe universal precautions when handling specimens.



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8. References

Manual of Diagnostic and Laboratory Tests, Mosby (1998)

Medical, Nursing and Allied Health Dictionary, 5th edition, Mosby (1998)

9. Related Documents

WCDHB Infection Control Manual

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	Developed By:	Quality Improvement Co-Ordinator
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