PROCEDURE MANUAL: PATHOLOGY AND CLINICAL LABORATORIES 1.6

SUBJECT: Specimen Rejection Criteria

Pre-analytical specimen integrity is extremely important to the final result reported by the laboratory. All specimen requirements as noted in the individual sections of this manual should be strictly followed. The most current specimen collection containers are identified on the patient Cerner lab label.

Northwest Hospital, Provision of Care Policy 5.159 states criteria for specimen rejection.

To ensure patient and employee safety, specimens falling into any of the categories listed below will not be accepted by the Laboratory for examination:

- Unlabeled specimens
- Improperly labeled specimens (no date and time of collection, no initials of collector).
- Improperly collected specimen (as defined below).
- Specimens showing gross evidence of contamination.
- Situations that make the identity of the sample or the validity of the results obtained unreliable.
- Specimens that have leaked or have specimen on the outside of the container (except for irreplaceable specimens such as CSF, surgical specimens, etc.).

Additionally, specific criteria are in place for selected sections of the Laboratory:

- All specimens must have the date and time of collection.
- There must be adequate specimen for the tests ordered.
- All specimens for culture, coagulation and urinalysis must arrive in the Laboratory within one hour of collection to assure specimen integrity.
- Specimens which require delivery on ice, but which arrive at room temperature.
- Non-sterile specimens which should be sterile collections.
- Hemolyzed specimens will be rejected (testing interference, inaccurate results).

Blood Bank - Criteria for rejection

- All Blood Bank specimens must have correct name and medical record numbers, including full last name and first name and the entire six digit medical record number.
- All Blood Bank specimens must have the signature of the person collecting the specimen (vs-the initials, which are satisfactory for all other sections) and have date and time of collection.
- Specimens collected at sites other than NWH are not accepted for compatability testing. Only blood typing and antibody screening accepted.
Chemistry - Criteria for rejection

- Spun SST or PST tubes which are received > 48 hours after collection
- Unspun SST or PST tubes or Red Top tubes which are received > 4 hours after collection.
- Grossly or moderately hemolyzed specimens (assay dependent).
- 24 hour urine collections without the appropriate preservative for the test requested.

Hematology / Coagulation - Criteria for rejection

- Under filled CBC tubes will be rejected (incorrect ratio of blood to anticoagulant).
- Clotted specimens for Hematology will be rejected.
- Lavender top tubes received for CBC > greater than 48 hours after collection (CBC specimens received > 24 hours may not be acceptable for Differential WBC counts).
- Under filled coagulation tubes will be rejected (incorrect ratio of plasma to anticoagulant)
- Over filled tubes will also be rejected for the same reason.
- Blue Top tubes for PT > 24 hours after collection.
- Blue Top tubes for PTT > 12 hours after collection.
- Coagulation or Hematology specimens which are clotted

Urinalysis - Criteria for rejection

- Urinalysis specimens received > 24 hours after collection (specimens should be refrigerated if submitted > 2 hours after collection).
- Urinalysis specimens received > 48 hours after collection in urine preservative / transport tube.

Microbiology - Criteria for rejection

- Swabs for culture must be moist.
- Specimens for ova and parasites which are received greater than 30 minutes after collection unless appropriately preserved
- Urine cultures received > 24 hours after collection (specimens should be refrigerated if submitted > 2 hours after collection).
- Urine for culture received > 48 hours after collection received in a urine C/S transport tube.
- Genital culture swabs received greater than 8 hours after collection.

Anatomic Pathology - Criteria for rejection
• Broken slides
• Slides for PAP smear without a name on the slide

The Laboratory staff will notify the patient’s caregiver when an unacceptable specimen is received. The Laboratory staff will cancel the order and note the date, time, and full name of the clinical staff member notified. A new order must be placed in the computer and a new specimen collected and submitted for analysis.