CONWAY REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM
CLINICAL LABORATORY

Collection and Transport of Non-laboratory Collected Specimens

POLICY

In an effort to provide quality patient care and assure accurate test results, the Laboratory has adopted the following policy for the acceptance of all non-laboratory collected specimens:

1. All specimens must be properly labeled with the patient's name, medical record number, date and time of collection, initials of collector (phlebotomist).
2. All specimens must be accompanied by a request slip indicating the procedures to be performed on the specimen. Request slip must contain the patient's name, location, medical record number, the collection date and time and initials of the collector. Request should be in the form of an electronically generated requisition or a downtime request. Downtime requests must contain all of the above listed information. See procedures for "Downtime".
3. All specimens must be accessioned into the Laboratory information system immediately upon arrival. Specimens not received through the pneumatic tube system must be given directly to a tech so that immediate accession of specimen can occur.
4. Specimens should be routed to the Laboratory immediately upon collection. However, to accommodate certain workload delays that may occur, the following guidelines will apply.
    a. Urine specimens must reach the Laboratory within two hours of collection to be acceptable for analysis.
    b. Coagulation specimens must reach the Laboratory within four hours of collection to be acceptable for analysis.
    c. Chemistry specimens must reach the Laboratory within two hours of collection to be acceptable for analysis.
    d. All other specimens must reach the Laboratory within four hours of collection to be acceptable for analysis. Exception: See policy on Unsatisfactory Specimen Criteria for Bacteriology.
5. All specimens should be maintained at ambient temperature unless otherwise specified in Users Guide to Laboratory Services.

6. See policy on Specimen Quality Assessment for further criteria on rejection of specimens that may occur during processing or testing procedures.

Specimens which do not meet the above requirements will not be accepted for analysis. The appropriate patient care unit or the nurse in charge of the indicated patient is to be notified as to the problem with the specimen and asked to submit a new specimen, or correct the specimen deficiency (completion of labeling requirement if not fully labeled, etc.) if the specimen is of a nature where recollection is not possible. Correction of deficiency must occur prior to initiation of testing. The Laboratory retains the right to reject any specimen of questionable identification.

The reason for specimen rejection may be documented into the specimen record. Statistics may be tabulated regularly to determine if opportunities for improvement of process or procedure exist.

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APPROVED BY:_____DATE_____
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