



PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL

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From: Professor CWK Lam
Honorary Chief of Service
Department of Chemical Pathology
Tel/Fax No: 2632 3338 / 2636 5090
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To: All COSs
NTEC Hospitals

Compliance in Providing Specimen Collection Date & Time for All Chemical Pathology Tests

For maintaining a good quality laboratory service, our department has been continuously striving to minimize any source of pre-analytical, analytical and post-analytical errors through serious implementation of standard operation procedures (SOP). It is evident that chemical pathology test results can be adversely affected by many pre-analytical factors. We have been requiring information on time of specimen collection because many metabolites may undergo marked dynamic changes upon delay in sample transportation or separation (blood gases, plasma potassium and glucose), or affected by physiological diurnal variation (cortisol, iron). Documenting specimen collection time is also essential for therapeutic drug monitoring (digoxin) and drug measurements especially those with medico-legal implications (urine toxicology screening).

In connection with the above, we would like to strictly reinforce, starting from 2 October 2006, the following laboratory practice that has also been recommended by our international accreditation body, the National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia (NATA).

- (1) Provision of **specimen collection DATE and TIME** is mandatory for **ALL Chemical Pathology tests** requested either by using the Generic Clinical Request System (GCRS), or a paper request form.
- (2) If the information on specimen collection date and time is missing, the requested laboratory test(s) will not be performed. But a report will be returned informing the requester (clinical staff in NTEC / laboratory staff outside NTEC) that the specimen collection information has been missing. The specimen will be kept in our laboratory for 7 working days and discarded afterwards if such information is still not supplied by the requester retrospectively.
- (3) If the specimen is intended to be further processed, please complete the **Supplementary Information Form** from <http://pwh.home/dept/chempath/Dnform.html> and fax it back to our laboratory at No. 2648 4262. Upon receipt of the missing information, the specimen will be processed accordingly.

If there are any queries on the above arrangements, please contact our Duty Biochemist at 2632 2658 or 2632 2331, or page through PWH Operator at 2632 2211 for discussion.

Thank you for your kind attention and cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Professor CWK Lam
(CWKL / MHMC / LCWL)

Cc.: Dr H Fung, CCE, NTEC
Dr Michael WM Suen, CC(PATH), NTEC
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