

Reference Number: UHB 017
Version Number: 4

Date of Next Review: 16th Apr 2022
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N/A

LABELLING OF SPECIMENS SUBMITTED TO MEDICAL LABORATORIES POLICY

Policy Statement

To ensure the Health Board delivers its aims, objectives, responsibilities and legal requirements transparently and consistently, we will advocate and promote the accurate labelling of specimens and accompanying laboratory request forms for safe and effective patient care. This policy describes the requirements for accurate positive identification of the patient from whom the specimen was taken, the clinical details surrounding the patient and the person and location where the result should be sent.

Policy Commitment

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board is committed to achieving excellence in providing safe, effective, efficient and compassionate care. In order to achieve this it is necessary to ensure that effective procedures are in place to ensure that all samples taken for laboratory investigations can be accurately and unambiguously assigned to the correct patient, and that all necessary information for analysis, interpretation and reporting is provided.

Supporting Procedures and Written Control Documents

This Policy and the supporting procedures describe the following with regard to sample labelling and patient identification.

- UHB 101 Patient Identification Policy
- UHB 100 Consent to Examination or Treatment Policy
- UHB 138 Incident, Hazard and Near Miss Reporting Policy and Procedure.
- UHB 149 Standard Infection Control Precautions Procedure

Scope

This policy relates specifically to the labelling of **specimens** submitted to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board medical laboratories for investigation and/or storage for subsequent investigation, and encompasses all body fluids and tissues, except blood components, blood products, cells or tissues for the purposes of transfusion or transplantation, or for storage for possible subsequent transfusion or transplantation.

Requirements for such transfusion related samples are described in the UHB 348 Blood Component Transfusion Procedure. Samples taken for point of care testing should follow the UHB 062 Point of Care Testing Policy.

Document Title: Labelling of Specimens Submitted to Laboratories Policy	2 of 19	Approval Date: 16 th Apr 2019
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Approved By: QSE Committee		

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	An Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) has been completed and this found there to be a no impact.
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Policy Approved by	Quality, Safety and Experience Committee
Group with authority to approve procedures written to explain how this policy will be implemented	For example: Health System Management Board
Accountable Executive or Clinical Board Director	Chief Operating Officer

Disclaimer

If the review date of this document has passed please ensure that the version you are using is the most up to date either by contacting the document author or the [Governance Directorate](#).

Summary of reviews/amendments			
Version Number	Date Review Approved	Date Published	Summary of Amendments
1	14/10/2009	17/08/2010	
1	07/06/2011		No change
2	14/06/2012	04/06/12	Some sections clarified; requirement for full name of referring clinician, location and clinical details made mandatory (except where patient safety would be put at risk)
3	05/03/2013	08/03/13	Updated to clarify specimen forms need to state the Consultant initial and surname, not full name.
4	16/04/19	08/05/19	Updated to clarify the management of known high risk specimens.

Equality & Health Impact Assessment for

Labelling of Specimens Submitted to Medical Laboratories

Please read the Guidance Notes in Appendix 1 prior to commencing this Assessment

1.	For service change, provide the title of the Project Outline Document or Business Case and Reference Number	No proposed change to Laboratory Medicine Service delivery. Document reviewed to provide clarity on sample labelling acceptance criteria and actions in the event of non-conformance with the policy.
2.	Name of Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate and title of lead member of staff, including contact details	Clinical Diagnostics and Therapeutics, Clive Morgan, Assistant Director of Therapies
3.	Objectives of strategy/ policy/ plan/ procedure/ service	The aim of this policy is to ensure that robust arrangements are in place to ensure that samples taken for laboratory analysis or storage can be accurately and unambiguously identified, and that all necessary information is supplied for appropriate and timely analysis, interpretation and reporting. In addition, any issues arising from the non-conformance with this policy will be reported via UHB 138 Incident, Hazard and Near Miss Reporting Policy and Procedure to establish the root-cause of the issue to avoid recurrence.
4.	Evidence and background	Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (UHB) is one of the largest NHS

<p>information considered. For example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population data • staff and service users data, as applicable • needs assessment • engagement and involvement findings • research • good practice guidelines • participant knowledge • list of stakeholders and how stakeholders have engaged in the development stages • comments from those involved in the designing and development stages <p>Population pyramids are available from Public Health Wales Observatory¹ and the UHB's 'Shaping Our Future Wellbeing' Strategy provides an overview of health need².</p>	<p>organisations in the UK, providing healthcare services for 475,000 people living in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. There are currently approximately 558 staff employed within the Laboratory Medicine Directorate that are involved in the collection, processing, testing, storage, reporting or management of patient specimens from both internal or external sources. On an average day we carry out 13,715 blood tests.</p> <p>http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/1143/10%20-%20UHB%20Shaping%20Our%20Future%20Wellbeing%20Strategy%20Final.pdf</p> <p>There are many papers that present the importance of accurate patient identification to the prevention of medical errors and demonstrate improvement after introducing and enforcing sample labelling procedures.</p> <p>https://scholar.google.co.uk/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0,5&as_vis=1&qsp=3&q=positive+patient+identification</p> <p>https://scholar.google.co.uk/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&as_vis=1&q=reducing+sample+labelling+errors&btnG=</p> <p>The Laboratory Medicine Directorate service has dedicated intranet and internet pages that explain the service, the testing repertoire and turn-around times.</p> <p>http://nww.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/portal/page?_pageid=253,972415,253_972416&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL</p> <p>The Laboratory Medicine Directorate undertakes engagement with service users via user surveys, responding to compliments and concerns, incident management and service user engagement days.</p>
<p>5. Who will be affected by the strategy/ policy/ plan/ procedure/ service</p>	<p>Service users, patients, staff.</p>

¹ <http://nww2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PubHObservatoryProjDocs.nsf>

² <http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/the-challenges-we-face>

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6. EQIA / How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Questions in this section relate to the impact on people on the basis of their 'protected characteristics'. Specific alignment with the 7 goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is included against the relevant sections.

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate. Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
<p>6.1 Age For most purposes, the main categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • under 18; • between 18 and 65; and • over 65 	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p> <p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.</p>

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate. Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
<p>6.2 Persons with a disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010 Those with physical impairments, learning disability, sensory loss or impairment, mental health conditions, long-term medical conditions such as diabetes</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction – http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/ and under heading Mislabelled Specimens, Page 11.</p>
<p>6.3 People of different genders: Consider men, women, people undergoing gender reassignment NB Gender-reassignment is anyone who proposes to, starts, is going through or who has completed a process to change his or her gender with or without going</p>	<p>Negative, there may be an assumption that a name belongs to a specific gender traditionally but the gender recorded may be opposed to this and the conflict may be seen as an error in the absence of qualifying supporting information.</p>		

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate. Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
through any medical procedures. Sometimes referred to as Trans or Transgender			
6.4 People who are married or who have a civil partner.	Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.	Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.	Mitigation captured in introduction – http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/ and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.
6.5 Women who are expecting a baby, who are on a break from work after having a baby, or who are breastfeeding. They are protected for 26 weeks after having a baby whether or not they are on maternity leave.	Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.	Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.	Mitigation captured in introduction – http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/ and under heading

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate. Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
			Mislabelled Specimens, Page 11.
<p>6.6 People of a different race, nationality, colour, culture or ethnic origin including non-English speakers, gypsies/travellers, migrant workers</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction – http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/ and under heading Mislabelled Specimens, Page 11.</p>
<p>6.7 People with a religion or belief or with no religion or belief. The term ‘religion’ includes a religious or philosophical belief</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction – http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/ and under heading Mislabelled Specimens, Page 11.</p>

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate. Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
<p>6.8 People who are attracted to other people of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the opposite sex (heterosexual); • the same sex (lesbian or gay); • both sexes (bisexual) 	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p> <p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabelled Specimens, Page 11.</p>
<p>6.9 People who communicate using the Welsh language in terms of correspondence, information leaflets, or service plans and design</p> <p>Well-being Goal – A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p> <p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabelled Specimens, Page 11.</p>
<p>6.10 People according to their income related group:</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in</p>

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate. Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
Consider people on low income, economically inactive, unemployed/workless, people who are unable to work due to ill-health	but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.	encourage use of user hand books.	introduction – http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/ and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.
6.11 People according to where they live: Consider people living in areas known to exhibit poor economic and/or health indicators, people unable to access services and facilities	Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.	Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.	Mitigation captured in introduction – http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/ and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.
6.12 Consider any other groups and risk factors relevant to this strategy, policy, plan, procedure	Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples	Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.	Mitigation captured in introduction –

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate. Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
and/or service	professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.		http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/ and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.

7. HIA / How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on the health and well-being of our population and help address inequalities in health?

Questions in this section relate to the impact on the overall health of individual people and on the impact on our population. Specific alignment with the 7 goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is included against the relevant sections.

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
7.1 People being able to access the service offered:	Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples,	Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand	Mitigation captured in introduction –

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
<p>Consider access for those living in areas of deprivation and/or those experiencing health inequalities</p> <p>Well-being Goal - A more equal Wales</p>	<p>precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>books.</p>	<p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.</p>
<p>7.2 People being able to improve /maintain healthy lifestyles:</p> <p>Consider the impact on healthy lifestyles, including healthy eating, being active, no smoking /smoking cessation, reducing the harm caused by alcohol and /or non-prescribed drugs plus access to services that support disease prevention (eg immunisation and vaccination, falls prevention). Also consider impact on</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p> <p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.</p>

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
<p>access to supportive services including smoking cessation services, weight management services etc</p> <p>Well-being Goal – A healthier Wales</p>			
<p>7.3 People in terms of their income and employment status: Consider the impact on the availability and accessibility of work, paid/ unpaid employment, wage levels, job security, working conditions</p> <p>Well-being Goal – A prosperous Wales</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p> <p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.</p>
<p>7.4 People in terms of their use of the physical environment:</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p>

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
<p>Consider the impact on the availability and accessibility of transport, healthy food, leisure activities, green spaces; of the design of the built environment on the physical and mental health of patients, staff and visitors; on air quality, exposure to pollutants; safety of neighbourhoods, exposure to crime; road safety and preventing injuries/accidents; quality and safety of play areas and open spaces</p> <p>Well-being Goal – A resilient Wales</p>	<p>professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>		<p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.</p>
<p>7.5 People in terms of social and community influences on their health: Consider the impact on</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p> <p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p>

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
<p>family organisation and roles; social support and social networks; neighbourliness and sense of belonging; social isolation; peer pressure; community identity; cultural and spiritual ethos</p> <p>Well-being Goal – A Wales of cohesive communities</p>	<p>be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>		<p>vale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.</p>
<p>7.6 People in terms of macro-economic, environmental and sustainability factors: Consider the impact of government policies; gross domestic product; economic development; biological diversity; climate</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p> <p>http://labhandbook.cardiffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabeled Specimens, Page 11.</p>

How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on:-	Potential positive and/or negative impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate Make reference to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate
Well-being Goal – A globally responsible Wales			

Please answer question 8.1 following the completion of the EHIA and complete the action plan

<p>8.1 Please summarise the potential positive and/or negative impacts of the strategy, policy, plan or service</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p> <p>Patient identification may be misinterpreted in the case of a transgender patient presenting with opposite gender name and gender recorded on same episode.</p>
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Action Plan for Mitigation / Improvement and Implementation

	Action	Lead	Timescale	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate
<p>8.2 What are the key actions identified as a result of completing the EHIA?</p>	<p>Policy applied to all samples but for paediatric samples, precious samples professional discrepancy can be applied within the appropriate laboratory.</p>	<p>Disseminate policy and encourage use of user hand books.</p>	<p>Complete on issuing policy.</p>	<p>Mitigation captured in introduction –</p> <p>http://labhandbook.car diffandvale.wales.nhs.uk/testkb/</p> <p>and under heading Mislabelled Specimens, Page 11.</p>

	Action	Lead	Timescale	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate
<p>8.3 Is a more comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessment or Health Impact Assessment required?</p> <p>This means thinking about relevance and proportionality to the Equality Act and asking: is the impact significant enough that a more formal and full consultation is required?</p>	N/A			
<p>8.4 What are the next steps?</p> <p>Some suggestions:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide whether the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ continues unchanged as there are no significant negative impacts ○ adjusts to account for the negative impacts 	continues unchanged as there are no significant negative impacts			

	Action	Lead	Timescale	Action taken by Clinical Board / Corporate Directorate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ continues despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to advance equality (set out the justifications for doing so) ○ stops. <p>Have your strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service proposal approved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publish your report of this impact assessment ● Monitor and review 				