

Manitoba Health, Healthy Living & Seniors (MHLS) supports reporting and learning from patient safety events. The focus of a patient safety review is to closely look at the health care system that surrounds and interacts with those giving and receiving care. The goal is to identify risks to patient safety and recommend the most effective ways to minimize risk and improve the delivery of healthcare.

Patient Safety Learning Advisory

Specimen Referred for Testing Out of Province

Summary:

A specimen was referred to a laboratory outside Manitoba to determine if the patient could participate in a clinical trial.

The sample was held by the courier in a facility for several days before the delivery was complete. At this point in time, the sample was no longer viable for testing.

Keywords:

Specimen testing, out of province testing

Device Name (if applicable):

Drug/Name/Fluid Name: (if applicable):

Type of Analysis: single event

Topic: Specimen/Laboratory

Findings of the Review:

An incorrect packing slip (waybill) was used. The courier requires a unique packing slip for shipments

containing dry ice.

While the courier company replaced the waybill, it incorrectly copied the shipping address. They indicated that the original packing label included was difficult to read.

There was no process to confirm receipt of the sample at the destination within required timelines.

System Learning:

Develop a detailed procedure for tracking the shipment of precious samples to external labs to safeguard the sanctity of these samples. The procedure will include communication with the receiving site to provide shipping information and a mechanism to flag a specimen so that shipment can be confirmed.

Shipping documentation will be prepared electronically to eliminate issues of legibility.

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