



VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MARYLAND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
BALTIMORE DIVISION
10 NORTH GREENE STREET
BALTIMORE, MD 21201

GEN00023.2

PATHOLOGY & LABORATORY MEDICINE SERVICE

Pneumatic Tube System Policy version 2 General Procedure # GEN00023

Purpose: To define procedures and responsibilities within Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service (P&LMS) that will establish safe practices for use of the pneumatic tube system in the transport of specimens to the laboratory.

Policy: The P&LMS will recognize safe and unsafe practices in the use of the pneumatic tube system, and will understand the limitations of this specimen transport mode.

Responsibility: The Chief, P&LMS and laboratory supervisors are responsible for the training of laboratory personnel in the use and limitations of the pneumatic tube system. The Engineering Service is responsible for the maintenance, repair and operation of the pneumatic tube system. The sender is responsible to package and submit specimens in the prescribed manner to eliminate leakage and maintain a safe work environment.

Action:

a. Limitations on the Transport of Specimens to the Laboratory:

- (1) All laboratory specimens may be transported to the laboratory via the pneumatic tube system with the following exceptions:
 - (a) Blood Gas syringes or Co-Oximetry specimens
 - (b) Blood Culture (Bactec) Bottles
 - (c) Blood and Blood Products for the Blood Bank
 - (d) Cerebrospinal Fluid (CSF)
 - (e) Cytology specimens
 - (f) Histology specimens
 - (g) 24-hour Urine specimens

It is strongly recommended that these specimens be hand delivered to the laboratory or sent via the dumb waiter in the 1st floor phlebotomy area.

- (2) All specimens must be placed in a sealed zip lock, biohazard bag before placement in the carrier.
- (3) All cups must have the lids securely fastened before being sealed in the biohazard bag.



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(4) The carrier must have a foam liner or cushion within it. It is the responsibility of the sender to maintain a supply of liners or cushions.

(5) Specimens are to be sent to the laboratory as soon as possible after collection.

Functions of Laboratory Personnel:

(2) The laboratory will send carriers to any site that calls ext. 5327 or 5328.

(3) The laboratory will return excess carriers (>3) to station code # 00. The computerized tube system will determine which sites need carriers.

(4) The laboratory will immediately notify Engineering Service at ext. 7020 in the event that the pneumatic tube system fails to operate properly or shuts down.

(5) In the event that a carrier is received contaminated with a fluid spill – regardless of the volume of the spill, the laboratory will:

(a) Immediately notify Engineering service of the contamination (ext. 7020), or the Hospital Operator (0) during off hours.

(b) Immediately notify a supervisor or pathologist.

(c) Hold all carriers for decontamination that arrive immediately after the contamination is detected.

(d) Not send additional carriers through the pneumatic tube system until decontamination is completed.

(6) The laboratory will record all pneumatic tube system problems in the Pneumatic Tube System Log located in the Laboratory Accessioning area.

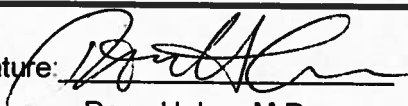
References:

1. VAMHCS SOP NO. 138/ENG-033, subject: Pneumatic Tube System

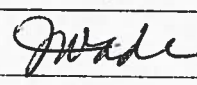


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DATE ADOPTED	Author of Procedure/Policy	Chief of Service
06/05/2007	Paul D. Gruver, MT	Signature:  Dong H. Lee M.D.

Policy/Procedure(s) Retired:		Date retired:
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11/13/17	2	

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Date revised	Revision #	Changes made	Signature
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