Questions about MLA:

1. When sending out a referral specimen, is the requisition sent with the specimen?  We have heard both yes and no.  We need to know because sometimes we get a specimen that is for micro and send out and we process ours and bring the send out to specimen receiving but are not sure if the req needs to be included.

The answer is yes and no, depending on the circumstances.

If the test requires a special DynaLIFE or ProvLab requisition, it is sent with the specimen.  If it has not been accessioned, it is sent with the requisition.

If the ref test doesn’t require a special requisition, and if it has been accessioned, we would not have to send the requisition.  Can you give me an example of when this might happen the most in micro?  I believe in most cases; you would not need to send the requisition.

1. Does specimen receiving only order samples that are not being processed here on inpatient samples?  So, a UCHL from YPCC would not be ordered in the LIS, would just go right in the cat B box?

We do not accession ref samples from community health centers including YPCC/Frame Lake.  We accession referred samples from Stanton and ACC.

A UCHL from YPCC would go right into the cat B box.

1. If referral samples are not being ordered, is the requisition at least looked at or does it just go in the cooler?

We often receive DynaLIFE requisitions from the communities for testing performed at Stanton, so we do check whether samples are for Stanton.

1. If a urine sample is received in an orange top sterile container and both culture and urinalysis is ordered, does the MLA mark on the requisition if they have poured off the sample for urinalysis?  We receive this and we must check and see if the urinalysis is already ordered.  Sometimes it is and sometimes it isn’t.  Can we make a rule that urines like this should be processed for culture first and then micro can order the urinalysis, split the sample, and bring it out to the core lab?

I was not aware that this was occurring.

My only concern is that urine for urinalysis is only good for two hours at room temperature.

I think it is best for Specimen Control to accession and pour off the core sample first before forwarding it onward to micro.  I have to double check on whether a scanned requisition can have two barcodes but if it can, we could put the urinalysis barcode on the requisition as a confirmation that it was done.  Could this work?

1. Do the MLA know that blood cultures should be put on the BACTEC as soon as they are received and if they are too busy to bring them back, they can call micro and we will come pick it up.  This has been happening quite a bit this week and it caused one set to be >24 hours which is extra work.  I can send out an email about this if that is easier.

They should absolutely know this.  Has it been an ongoing issue, or just this week in particular?

I just had a staff meeting and reminded staff that all sputum samples go to micro, that blood cultures should be handled as STAT and immediately put onto the BACTEC (and to call a micro tech if they’re unable to do so).  I also discussed the process of handling urines for urinalysis and culture, and the MLA’s I spoke with today said it’s just as easy to also order the culture and sensitivity when they order the urinalysis.  I told them they would have to ensure that they input the antibiotics and clinical history if we are ordering them.

Would you like the MLAs to order the urine cultures on samples where both urinalysis and C&S are ordered?  I believe you didn’t want them to in the past due to errors so let me know what you think.