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SUWASIRIPAYA

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MRI/DIR/Common/01/2018

28.11.2018

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சுகாதார, போசணை மற்றும் சுதேச வைத்திய அமைச்சு  
Ministry of Health, Nutrition & Indigenous Medicine

General Circular No : 01-49/2018

Provincial Directors of Health Services/ Regional Directors of Health Services,  
Directors of Teaching Hospitals/ Directors of Specialized Campaigns and  
All Heads of Hospitals and Institutions under the Line Ministry

Instructions for submission of Specimens for Laboratory Testing

Medical Research Institute, Colombo

The Medical Research Institute is the premier national institute involved in medical research and provides highly specialized diagnostic facilities, which are not provided by any other laboratory in the country.

Many new diagnostic techniques have been introduced at MRI recently and departmental statistics shows that the number of tests performed has been nearly doubled during the last few years.

With this increasing work load of the MRI, it is hereby instructed to adhere to the following guidelines, (see Annexure 1) enabling provision of an efficient and effective laboratory service to the country.

Dr. Anil Jasinghe

Director General of Health Services

Dr. Anil Jasinghe  
Director General of Health Services  
Ministry of Health, Nutrition & Indigenous Medicine,  
"Suwasiripaya"  
385, Rev. Baddegama Wimalawansa Thero Mawatha,  
Colombo 10.

## Annexure 1

### Instructions for submission of Specimens for Laboratory Testing

#### Medical Research Institute, Colombo

1. Smaller hospitals should obtain the laboratory services from the larger hospitals in close proximity when requesting routine/ non-specialized laboratory tests (eg:- PGH, Badulla could cater to laboratory specimens from DGH N<sup>o</sup> 1 Eliya, DHs- Bandarawela and Haputale.)
2. All specimens from hospitals should be sent to MRI through the hospital laboratory (unless at an emergency situation). A separate institutional register could be maintained for this purpose.
3. When sending specimens to MRI, the laboratory staff should take a special note regarding the following.
  - a) Before sending a specimen for a test, please check whether that test is performed at the MRI. This can be done either by making a telephone call or checking the MRI web site.
  - b) Check whether the correct specimen has been taken for a particular test. If not please inform the ward and obtain a correct sample (eg- blood, urine, tissue...).
  - c) Check whether the specimen has been collected to a **proper** container. If not, Please refrain from sending samples in penicillin bottles and, use plastic disposable tubes / bottles. contact the ward and get them to collect a sample in to a correct container (eg- acid washed bottle for serum Ca<sup>2+</sup>)
  - d) Please refrain from sending specimens which have been collected few days back (accurate results could only be obtained from fresh samples)
  - e) Specimens which need to be transported in cool condition, should only be sent properly packed in ice (eg- samples for PCR tests should be transported between 2 - 8°C).
  - f) Medico-legal specimens submitted by the JMO, should only be sent in leak proof containers and under sealed envelope. Specimens should not be decomposed. (eg- serum could be separated and sent, without sending whole blood when necessary). Necessary tests could be performed for medico-legal specimens only if the sample is sent, without an undue delay.
  - g) Different tests are performed at different departments of MRI and specimens should be sent separately in proper containers for each test with appropriately filled request forms (eg- refrain from sending a specimen in a single container for tests done at Bacteriology, Virology and Biochemistry departments).

- h) Please check whether the request forms are filled properly with necessary information. If not, send them back to the ward to be correctly filled before sending to MRI. The requesting Consultant's signature and the seal should be there for highly specialized tests.
- i) The name of the hospital should be clearly written on the request form. Do not use abbreviations (eg- THK for Teaching Hospital Karapitiya). May use the hospital seal.
- j) When labeling the specimen, please use the below given format. It is very important to fix it well on the container to prevent the label coming-off and losing the identity of the specimen.

Eg:-

**Blood for dengue antibody**

Name : Mr. M.K.D.Perera  
BHT : 001530  
Wd No : 01  
Hospital : Teaching Hospital, Kurunegala

- K) Each specimen should be allocated a laboratory serial number and the same number should be written in the request form. By doing this, any delay at the MRI specimen counter could be minimized.
- l) Specimens with the request forms should be sent to MRI with a delivery book, where all laboratory serial numbers of specimens are entered.
- m) Please ensure that all specimens are sent in leak proof containers.
4. All laboratory test reports will be sent to relevant hospital laboratories (A convenience report issue counter for manual collection of reports by hospitals is established near sample receipt counter of MRI)
5. Special specimen collection bottles from MRI will only be issued on week days from 9.00am to 3.00pm and Saturdays from 9.00am to 11.30am.

**For further information contact the relevant departments during working hours and the resident MLT during afterhours.**

**011-2693532-4, 011-2693527**

**Hot line 011-2693536**

**web site :- [www.mri.gov.lk](http://www.mri.gov.lk)**

**Please make this information available to all relevant staff in your hospital.**