

Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum

To: Central Zone Healthcare Providers and Health Service Directors

From: Dr. Glenn Patriquin, Director Bacteriology
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Date: September 1, 2022

Message: Changes to Bacteriology specimen collection in Central Zone




Over the next three months the QEII Microbiology laboratory will begin transitioning bacteriology testing **performed in Central Zone** to the automated WASP lab system. This involves phasing out the current red topped AMIES Transport media; product # 151081, and begin to transition the new liquid based multipurpose eSwab™. The current AMIES Transport media will be accepted until the existing stock is depleted. Expired swabs will not be processed.

How to order: The new eSwab™ product code is #241984 SWAB FLOC AMIES 1ML (liquid).

- Internal: Once current inventory is depleted closet lists will be automatically updated
- External: Order through NSH stores using your normal process using the Lab Form to replace any old kits. NSH Customer Service Desk: 902-466-8070

How to store them: Swabs can be stored at room temperature until use.

When to use them: Used for culturing bacteria. Be sure the correct swab kit (clear liquid transport media) is used as viral culture media (pink liquid) cannot be used to isolate bacteria.

Bacteriology Swab (e.g MRSA, group A Strep throat swab)		Virology Transport Media (e.g COVID, HSV)
OLD Amies Swab	New eSwab™	
		

How to use them: The new collection kit includes swabs that are scored and broken off into the transport medium (clear liquid) after collection. Refer to the attached instruction sheet for guidance on how to use the new swabs.

When to transport them: After patient sampling transport to the laboratory as soon as possible. Best practice is to transport collected swabs at 2-8 degrees Celsius but room temperature is acceptable unless shipment is delayed beyond 48 hours.

If you have any questions, please contact the Microbiology Laboratory at 902-473-2120



Beginning on August 1, 2022 NSH Central Zone will be replacing Amies transport media (STORES Stock # 151081) with Copan ESwab (STORES Stock # 241984).

ESwab is a liquid based multipurpose collection and transport system that maintains the viability of aerobic, anaerobic and fastidious bacteria for up to 48 hours. The ESwab system collects and releases more specimen, significantly improving patient test results and decreasing the need for repeat testing due to insufficient sample.

ESwab replaces multiple transport devices with just one system eliminating the need to stock multiple types of swabs.

ESWAB INSTRUCTIONS

ESWAB IS EASY TO USE:

- Perform hand hygiene and put on gloves if necessary.
- Perform positive patient identification.
- Open the peel pouch.
- Remove the swab.
- Collect the patient sample using the swab. **Avoid touching the swab applicator below the pink molded breakpoint** as this could lead to contamination and incorrect test results.
- Remove the screw cap from the tube and insert the swab **all the way to the bottom of the tube**.
- Hold the tube away from your face. Holding the end of the swab shaft, bend it at a 180 degrees angle to break at the marked breakpoint. **If needed, gently twist the shaft between thumb and forefinger to completely remove it.**
- **Screw the cap on tightly to prevent leakage.**
- Dispose of the swab shaft in a regular trash receptacle.
- Apply patient identification label or write patient information on the tube label.
- Follow the standard operating procedures of transport and testing for your facility.
- Remove gloves if necessary and perform hand hygiene.

NOTE:

The ESwab Liquid Amies fluid maintains the viability of diverse bacteria. **Do not send a dry ESwab as this will lead to unsatisfactory results.**

If the tube spills its contents prior to inserting the swab, the liquid is non-toxic. Simply put the swab into another tube before sending it to the laboratory and discard the spilled tube.

If the tube spills after contamination, follow procedure for blood and body fluid clean up.

If contaminated fluid splashes onto the personnel collecting the sample, treat as a blood and body fluid exposure. Refer to your facility's infection control manual for further direction.

