



MEMORANDUM

To: Physicians, Clinics, Referring hospitals

From: Dr. E. Filter – Cytology Section Head, Division of Anatomical Pathology, Central Zone, NS Health

Colleen Caines – Manager, Division of Anatomical Pathology, Central Zone, NS Health

Date: December 21st, 2015

Subject: Rejected Pap Smears and Repeat Cervical Screening

A recent audit of mislabeled and unlabeled Pap smears received at the QEII Cytopathology Laboratory revealed that a significant number of Pap smears were rejected and not processed due to improper labeling at the time of specimen collection. In a small subset of these cases, the laboratory did not receive a repeat Pap smear within the recommended follow-up period.

To ensure patient safety and quality of care, it is extremely important that ALL laboratory specimens (including Pap smears) and requisitions are labeled with two patient identifiers (i.e. full name and health card number or other acceptable unique identifier). Please note that as of June 1st, 2014, Pap smears have been classified as “retrievable specimens”, and as such, are rejected when received mislabeled or unlabeled.

As per the current Nova Scotia cervical screening guidelines, repeat Pap tests should be performed within 8 weeks if the initial Pap smear was deemed unsatisfactory or was rejected by the laboratory.

Please feel free to contact David Moore, Cytopathology Supervisor at (902)–473–8408 should you have any questions or concerns regarding this memorandum.