

Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum

To: NSHA Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Health Service Directors and Laboratories

From: Program of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

Date: March 12, 2019

Subject: **Provincial Standardization in Reporting of Peripheral Blood Morphology**

The Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Program is standardizing the reporting of peripheral blood morphology across Nova Scotia. The changes below are based on the International Council for Standardization in Haematology (ICSH) guidelines and will be implemented across the province by March 26th, 2019.

Notable examples of the changes being implemented include:

- Neutrophil Bands will be counted as Segmented Neutrophils.
- The category “Atypical Lymphocytes” will no longer be used. Normal, abnormal, and reactive lymphocytes will be distinguished in the manual differential.
- Red cell morphology grading and reporting has changed.
- Red cell Anisocytosis, Poikilocytosis, Microcytosis, Macrocytosis, and Hypochromasia will no longer be graded or reported in the manual red cell assessment.
- When schistocytes are the main red cell abnormality on the slide, the schistocytes will be quantified and reported as a percentage of total red cells.
- White cells that cannot be otherwise categorized are to be counted as “Other”, and a descriptive comment added.
- Manual differentials will no longer be performed on samples if the white blood cell count is $0.5 \times 10^9/L$ or less. Assessment of red cell, white cell and platelet morphology will still be performed.

Please contact Dr. Robert Liwski, Division of Hematopathology Central Zone, at robert.liwski@nshealth.ca , or speak to your local laboratory if you have any questions.