



Capital Health

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Physicians, Clinics, Referring hospitals

**From:** Dr. R. MacIntosh – Cytology Section Head, Division of Anatomical Pathology, Capital Health  
Colleen Caines - Manager, Division of Anatomical Pathology, Capital Health

**Date:** April 30, 2014

**Subject:** Change in procedure for handling mislabeled or unlabeled Pap smears

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For reasons of patient safety and quality of care, it is extremely important that ALL lab specimens, including Pap smears, be labeled correctly with two patient identifiers (i.e. full name and health card number). The objective is to reduce the risk of processing a specimen and issuing results on an incorrect patient.

Effective June 1, 2014, Pap smears received at the Capital Health Cytopathology Laboratory MUST be properly labeled. As of that date, we will strictly adhere to the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine's policies for the handling of mislabeled and unlabeled specimens, meaning that ANY specimens not properly labeled WILL NOT be processed. The physician who commits the error in labeling will be responsible for notifying the patient and repeating the test.

If a Pap smear is rejected you will receive a "**Cancelled Test**" report, which will state the reason for rejection and the requirement for a repeat collection. You **will not** receive a report generated under the usual Pathology template.

Please feel free to contact David Moore, Cytopathology Supervisor at 473-8408 should you have any questions or concerns regarding this process change.