

RAHIM MEDICAL CENTRE AND GENERAL HOSPITAL

Specimen Management Policy

Effective Date: _____

Review Date: _____

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe, accurate, and efficient management of clinical specimens at RAHIM MEDICAL CENTRE AND GENERAL HOSPITAL. Proper specimen management safeguards patient safety, ensures reliable laboratory results, and maintains compliance with regulatory standards.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

All healthcare personnel involved in the collection, labeling, transportation, storage, and testing of specimens

Laboratory staff, phlebotomists, nurses, and allied health professionals

All types of patient specimens, including blood, urine, tissue, swabs, and other clinical samples

3. Definitions

Specimen: Any biological sample obtained from a patient for diagnostic, therapeutic, or research purposes.

Specimen Management: The complete process of handling specimens, including collection, labeling, transportation, storage, testing, and disposal.

Chain of Custody: Documentation ensuring traceability and accountability of specimens from collection to analysis.

4. Policy Statement

RAHIM MEDICAL CENTRE AND GENERAL HOSPITAL is committed to:

Ensuring the integrity, accuracy, and traceability of all specimens.

Protecting patient safety and confidentiality.

Complying with national and international laboratory standards and regulations.

Providing clear responsibilities and procedures for all staff involved in specimen management.

5. Specimen Collection

Collect specimens only for authorized tests ordered by licensed healthcare providers.

Verify patient identification using at least two identifiers (e.g., full name and hospital ID).

Use appropriate collection containers, preservatives, and methods according to test requirements.

Obtain informed consent when required.

Follow standard infection control procedures, including use of gloves, gowns, and PPE.

6. Labeling and Documentation

Label each specimen immediately after collection with:

Patient name and hospital ID

Date and time of collection

Type of specimen

Collector's initials

Complete accompanying requisition forms accurately.

Maintain records in the laboratory information system or logbooks.

7. Transportation

Transport specimens promptly to the laboratory in secure, leak-proof containers.

Maintain temperature requirements for each specimen type (e.g., refrigeration for certain samples).

Use biohazard transport bags and comply with hospital and regulatory guidelines.

8. Reception and Storage in Laboratory

Verify specimen labeling and documentation upon receipt.

Reject specimens that are improperly labeled, damaged, or unsuitable for testing.

Store specimens under appropriate conditions to preserve integrity until testing.

Maintain access logs and adhere to chain-of-custody protocols for sensitive specimens.

9. Testing and Analysis

Perform testing only by trained, competent laboratory personnel.

Follow standard operating procedures (SOPs) and quality control measures.

Document results accurately and ensure timely reporting to the ordering clinician.

10. Specimen Retention and Disposal

Retain specimens for the duration required by hospital policy or regulatory standards.

Dispose of specimens safely using approved biohazard protocols.

Ensure documentation of disposal in laboratory records.

11. Quality Assurance and Safety

Regularly audit specimen management practices to ensure compliance with SOPs.

Implement corrective actions for deviations or errors.

Ensure staff receive ongoing training in specimen handling, safety, and infection control.

12. Staff Responsibilities

Collectors: Obtain specimens safely and label accurately.

Laboratory Personnel: Verify, store, test, and document specimens accurately.

Supervisors: Monitor compliance, conduct audits, and address deviations.

All Staff: Report incidents such as spillage, mislabeling, or contamination immediately.

13. Compliance and Legal Requirements

Adhere to all national regulations, accreditation standards, and hospital policies for specimen management.

Unauthorized access, mishandling, or falsification of specimens is strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary action.

14. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years or whenever updates in regulatory standards or best practices occur.

Approval of updates is required by the Hospital Management Committee.

15. Acknowledgment

I, _____, acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the Specimen Management Policy of RAHIM MEDICAL CENTRE AND GENERAL HOSPITAL.

Signature: _____

Date: _____