Tairawhiti Rheumatic Fever Prevention Project

Lab Forms & Throat Swabs

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Requirements of Nursing requests for Laboratory Investigations

- The investigations are within the scope for a registered Nurse to order.
- A “pp” order exists from either a medical officer or an approved clinical guideline and the identified medical clinician responsible for the patient accepts responsibility for the results (we are using this clause for the RFPP).
- Or the Nurse scope of practice is such that, in consultation with the medical clinician responsible for the patient, changes to treatment can be instituted by the nurse and the nurse accepts responsibility for ensuring appropriate action is taken in response to the results.
Key Points

• Nurses may order laboratory tests under special circumstances.
  - It is essential that requests are accurate and complete
• Only approved nurses and nurses completing laboratory requests forms on instruction of a medical officer will be accepted
• Incomplete details may result in the sample not being processed and further sampling being required
• **Complete all sections.** All handwriting must be legible and in blue or black ink
• **Apply current sticky label to form** (if available)
• Check currency of information e.g. correct clinician & Other information requested on the form, and not supplied by the sticky label must still be filled out (e.g. time and date of sample)
Mandatory information required on the laboratory request form

- Surname & first name of client
- NHI number (or results won't get put on iSoft or sent to the requesters inbox) NHI numbers can be searched for in iPMS or on iSoft.
- DOB, Gender
- Relevant clinical information – e.g. GAS
- The test being ordered – under microbiology - culture tick Swab, Site: Throat or write throat Swab under other tests
- Name and designation of Nurse collecting sample. (Name must be Legible)
- Time and date of swab must be noted – on lab form and on swab label.
- Name of Requester ordering investigation (e.g. Dr Mary Stonehouse)
Filling in the Lab Form
Throat Anatomy

- Hard palate
- Soft palate
- Palatine tonsil
- Epiglottis
- Tongue
- Vocal fold
- Trachea
- Esophagus
Taking a Throat swab

- AVOID TOUCHING THE TONGUE AND LIPS.

- SWAB EXUDATE AND BOTH TONSILS.

- ALSO POSTERIOR PHARYNGEAL WALL – BEHIND THE UVULA AND BETWEEN THE TONSILS.
Strep throat showing Exudate
How the Test is Performed

- Explain procedure and rationale to client
- Gain consent from Client and Parent or Guardian
- Assemble equipment and position client
- Ask if they have used antiseptic mouthwashes or medicated lozenges before the test.
- Tilt head back and get person to open mouth wide.
- Ask them to say a long ahhhh or breathe in through the mouth which lowers the tongue and widens the throat
- Rub sterile cotton swab on the posterior wall of the throat and over the tonsils.
- Explain throat may be sore at the time the test is taken and they may feel the need to gag and close the mouth while the swab touches this area. Request they try and resist this
- This test is safe and well-tolerated. In very few patients, the sensation of gagging may lead to an urge to vomit or cough.
Equipment for taking a swab

- Consent – can have verbal for swab, need written for medication
- Blue top, dry swab in Bacterial transport medium (agar)

- Tongue depressor
- Good lighting or Otoscope
- Specimen bag
- Lab request form
- Hand wash facilities or Antiseptic hand rub
- It is recommended that a throat swab be sent to the Lab within 2 hours but the transwab system will maintain viability of GAS for 24 - 48 hrs.
- Swabs are processed here at the Lab so as long as they reach the lab by 16.30 they will be processed the same day.
- Keep swab at room temperature (Between 5 – 25 ºC) do not refrigerate.
Questions?