

<b>SECTION 8A: CLINICAL PRACTICES</b>	<b>POLICY: 8A.14</b>
<b>POLICY: OBTAINING LABS &amp; COMMUNICATING RESULTS</b>	<b>PAGE: 1 OF: 3</b>

**POLICY:**

- Helms Home Care will collect lab specimens in accordance with orders from the prescribing provider (or provider’s office) overseeing the patient’s therapy as outlined on the Plan of Treatment.
  - Helms Home Care will not collect specimens ordered by other providers not directly related to the specific therapy the Agency is authorized to administer, as directed by the dispensing specialty pharmacy. Exceptions apply for Private Duty patients.
- Agency staff will not discuss lab results with any Patient / Caregiver, nor will they interpret, analyze, or make any decisions regarding patient care based on lab results.
- The Agency will not verbally, electronically, or physically provide lab results directly to a Patient / Caregiver apart from a direct Medical Records Release request.
- Trough draws will be obtained 30-60 minutes prior to the next dose.
- Peak draws will be obtained 30-60 minutes after the dose has completely infused.
- Re-draws due to hemolyzed or otherwise unviable specimen(s), missed tests, or laboratory error do not require a re-draw order.
- Re-draws for repeat testing due to erroneous, high, or otherwise questionable results require a specific order for the specific test(s) being repeated / re-drawn.
- The Agency will comply with individual laboratory facility requirements regarding supplies, forms, drop-off procedures, and obtaining results.
- The Agency will utilize publicly funded hospital lab facilities for uninsured / indigent patients.
- The Agency will make reasonable effort to utilize lab facilities as requested by the Patient / Caregiver / MD / Pharmacy and notify any party when a request cannot be accommodated.
- The Agency will have a nurse available on-call 24 / 7 to accept critical lab results.
  - Critical results will be reported by the Agency directly to the ordering physician.
  - As requested or applicable, critical results may additionally be reported to the attending pharmacy.

Policies & Procedures



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**PROCEDURE:**

- Upon receipt of new or changed orders that include blood draws / lab tests the Agency shall create a lab requisition form that includes:
  - Patient Name & DOB and applicable diagnosis code(s)
  - Patient billing / insurance information
  - Ordered tests & test codes (as applicable to the facility)
  - Ordering MD Name & NPI number
  
- Visit(s) to obtain ordered labs are scheduled in accordance with orders.
  
- For any instance in which the Agency is unable to obtain labs or results as ordered (examples below), the Agency shall (as applicable) first notify the attending Pharmacy to discuss and decide options and, if / when the Pharmacy defers, the Agency shall contact the ordering physician directly to determine how to proceed.
  - Patient’s schedule / availability does not allow visits on the appropriate day(s) / time(s) needed to meet the order
  - Patient is unavailable / misses scheduled lab visit
  - Agency does not have nursing available on the appropriate day(s) / time(s) needed to meet the order
  - Patient / Caregiver refuse lab procedure
  - Patient unable to produce specimen (urine / stool)
  - Nurse unable to obtain blood specimen
  - Specimen gets damaged or otherwise becomes unviable for processing
  - Laboratory facility mis-handles specimen or is unable to produce test result(s)
  
- An Agency nurse will obtain lab specimen(s), as ordered, in accordance with agency lab draw policy and procedure.
  
- An Agency nurse will deliver lab specimen(s) as required by the laboratory facility in use.
  
- The Agency will obtain an electronic copy of lab results to enter / save in the patient’s medical record

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- Results for patient’s whose Pharmacy provides Lab-in-a-Box™, will not be obtained by the Agency or saved in the patient’s HHC medical record. These results are sent directly to the Pharmacy via the Lab-in-a-Box™ program. HHC does not have access to this information.
- The Agency goal is to obtain STAT results within four (4) hours and general blood results within one (1) business day, however, the Agency has no authority over laboratory facilities, their processing protocols, or the timing of lab results. Lab facilities maintain sole discretion over whether to process specimens in-house, and in what priority, or to send them to an external processing facility. These factors can significantly impact processing times and the availability of results.
- Results and critical results are reviewed, analyzed, and interpreted by the ordering physician and attending pharmacist.
- Decisions to change care plan (increase / decrease in dose, hold / discontinue dose, etc.) are made by the Physician / Pharmacist and reported to the Agency with an accompanying order as applicable.