



CCLS Connection

"Your partner in health care ... together we make a difference"

April 2015

Volume 11, Issue 1

Medical Laboratory Professionals Week

Now in its 40th year, Medical Laboratory Professionals Week is celebrated April 19-25 and provides an opportunity to increase public understanding of and appreciation for clinical laboratory staff.

There are approximately 300,000 practitioners of clinical laboratory science in the United States. Since the development of this career group in the 1920s, the clinical laboratory science professional has played an increasingly vital role in the diagnosis and prevention of disease. Today, the laboratory professional is a key member of the health care team.

Recognizing our laboratory professionals

Chances are if you ever were diagnosed with an illness, it was a laboratory test that confirmed what was causing it. Laboratory testing is equally important in establishing that individuals are meeting their wellness goals. An estimated 60 to 70 percent of all decisions regarding a patient's diagnosis and treatment are based on laboratory tests. To recognize this contribution, CentraCare Health hospital and clinic sites are celebrating Medical Laboratory Professionals Week in honor of the great care provided by all members of the laboratory team.

Thank you for allowing us to partner with you!



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Mission Statement

As part of **CENTRA CARE HEALTH**, we are a team of dedicated health care professionals whose mission is to provide quality service, expert consultation and comprehensive medical laboratory information to Central Minnesota.



Test Utilization Management at CCLS

Submitted by: Diane Stein, CCLS Specimen Referral Center Team Lead



Specimen Referral Center team members (L to R): Lisa Edenborg, Linda Ley, Sue Stay, Diane Stein, Barb Warnert, Jess Hom

Test utilization has become a hot topic in laboratory medicine as esoteric testing becomes more complex and expensive with the advancement of technology. CentraCare Laboratory Services (CCLS) has been on the forefront of this initiative with the development of the Laboratory Utilization Review Committee (LURC), chaired by Pathologist Dr. Matthew Zieske of St. Cloud Pathologists, PA. The committee has members representing a wide variety of health care areas, including medical staff, hospital administration, clinic administration, genetics specialists and laboratory administration.

So, what exactly is “utilization management”? Essentially, it is managing how tests are used. It is about selecting the appropriate test for the patient and doing the right test at the right time while considering whether the test is going to benefit the patient by enhancing treatment and improving outcomes. Historically, physicians have been able to order any test of their choosing

and request that it be sent to any reference laboratory of their choice. The laboratory community has accommodated any and all special requests, no questions asked.

As one can imagine, this unlimited access can attribute to the increasing costs of health care. Reimbursement for many of these tests is often extremely low in proportion to the actual fee that must be paid to the reference laboratory. Laboratories are now beginning to step in to attempt to manage these costs in the form of test utilization management programs.

Over the past several years, steps have been taken at CCLS to streamline the use of multiple reference laboratories to one primary provider, Mayo Medical Laboratories (MML). By directing all of our volume to one laboratory, we can take advantage of lower pricing. We also have an interface between the Sunquest laboratory information system (LIS) and

MML software which allows for electronic submission of orders and autofiling of results directly into the Epic electronic medical record (EMR). These enhancements enable us to provide the quickest turn-around-time possible as results are available to the provider in real-time.

To enforce this system, a policy is in place stating that if a test is available at or through MML (meaning MML would forward it on to one of their reference laboratories), that is where CCLS will send the specimen for testing. Any exception to this policy, which is reviewed annually by the medical staff, would require approval by the laboratory medical director on a case-by-case basis.

CentraCare Health’s department of Medical Oncology provides an example of a successful laboratory utilization partnership. This department has been using an enhanced ordering process by deferring bone marrow chromosome testing, flow cytometry and FISH tests to the discretion of the reviewing Pathologist. In conjunction with MML, an “order hold” system allows submission of the bone marrow specimen to MML, but deferred testing until a Pathologist has reviewed the case results of testing and stains performed by the Histology

Test Utilization Management at CCLS - Continued

department. If the decision is made to proceed with testing, the specimen is already at MML and no time is lost in transport. If testing is determined to be unnecessary based on initial findings, no charges are incurred and testing is cancelled. This process alone has saved thousands of dollars since its inception.

Many esoteric tests do not have order codes built in the LIS/EMR and these requests come through to the laboratory in the form of an "MBAT", or Miscellaneous Battery. The laboratory's Specimen Referral Center (SRC) utilizes an internal flow chart for any MBAT with a test cost of >\$500 to determine

whether the reference laboratory or CentraCare will do the billing. The billing entity is determined by a combination of order location, performing laboratory and patient insurance. In the case of an inpatient, a Pathologist will contact the provider to determine if the test is medically necessary during the hospital stay and will change the course of treatment. If not, the test is deferred to a clinic visit where reimbursement is generally higher.

SRC staff also work directly with CentraCare genetic counselors to review orders to determine if the right test mix has been requested. For example, rather than ordering a costly full gene sequence test, there may be

a specific mutation test that can be performed at a lower cost. The genetic counselors are experts regarding what testing is available for specific gene disorders and can direct the providers to the most appropriate test that will provide the diagnosis in question at the lowest possible cost.

As health care professionals, we are continually challenged to identify mechanisms to reduce costs. Laboratory test utilization management is key to our strategic business plan in meeting the vision of our organization through enhancements in quality, safety, service and value.

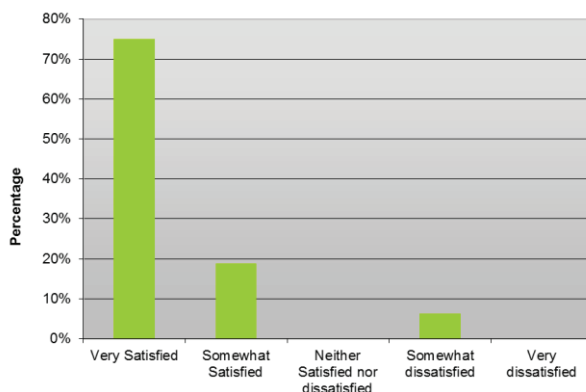
Outreach Customer Satisfaction Survey

CCLS recently released the electronic Outreach Program customer survey in follow-up to its first launch in 2013. The survey covered such topics as quality, safety, service and value. Data was broken down into a number of categories for review and evaluation.

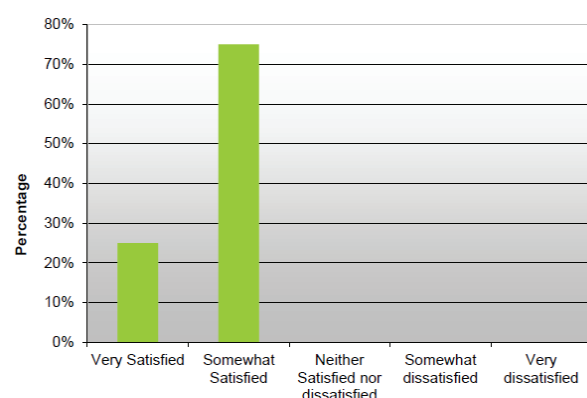
This tool was designed as a component of our strategic initiatives to continually improve our clinical and service quality. The initial launch provided some information that could be used to enhance our systems, however overall response rates were lower than expected. After

our second launch, response rates have continued to fall short of our goals. As a result, future distribution of this survey is being reevaluated. Thank you to those of you that have participated in the survey.

Overall satisfaction results



CCH Partners



Outreach Clients

CentraCare Health Laboratory Integration

With the continued growth of CentraCare Health (CCH), departmental integration has been a focus to assure continuity of care. With multiple laboratory sites throughout the system, laboratory leadership has made it a priority to establish standardized equipment and practices so our customers can expect the same high levels of service regardless of the CentraCare facility they choose for their health care needs.

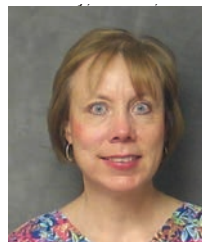
On November 1, 2001 CentraCare Laboratory Services (CCLS), a branch of the CentraCare Health System was formed. Laboratory professionals from CentraCare Clinic - Women and Children, CentraCare Clinic - RiverCampus and St. Cloud Hospital joined forces to become CCLS. CCLS was then composed of two specimen collection/testing sites and one specimen collection only location. On January 1, 2015 the laboratory and employees from CCH – Adult and Pediatric Urology also become a part of the CCLS workforce.

In 2005 CCLS began collaboration efforts with laboratory leadership from CentraCare Clinic, CentraCare Health – Melrose, and CentraCare Health – Long Prairie. The laboratory leaders from Sauk Centre, Monticello and Paynesville joined the team when their organizations became CentraCare Health. This leadership group meets on a monthly basis with the primary goal of laboratory integration and standardization throughout CentraCare Health. This integration will begin to

evolve communications such as this Connection newsletter as well.

As the team continues to work together to meet these system goals, we would like to take the opportunity to introduce you to this expanded leadership group to gain further understanding of the laboratory system, their areas of responsibility and their vast years of service in the laboratory profession.

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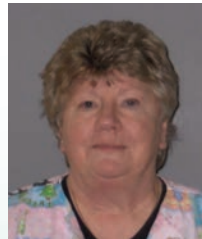


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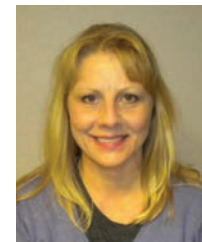


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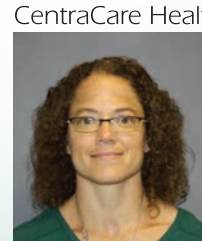
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CentraCare Health welcomes Adult and Pediatric Urology

Submitted by: Robin Sarner, Coordinator and Pam Rakke, Anatomic Pathology Specialist

On January 1, 2015 Adult and Pediatric Urology (APU) joined CentraCare Health while its laboratory became part of CCLS. This partnership has brought new opportunities to provide additional testing to patients for this specialty service.

The clinical laboratory is staffed Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The team consists of one Medical Laboratory Technician and one Laboratory Assistant that collect specimens as well as perform urinalysis, prostate specific antigen and post-vasectomy testing.

The urology specialty provides unique laboratory exposure

to disease states including hematuria, chronic urinary tract infections and malignancies while also helping patients with the challenges of infertility. In addition to testing performed on site, samples are also referred to the laboratory at St. Cloud Hospital for other evaluation.

Referral testing

The pathology department performs testing on both tissue and urine samples. Commonly submitted tissue samples are prostate needle biopsy specimens. Urologists often use a core "extended" biopsy strategy for patients undergoing initial prostate biopsy. This extended biopsy is done in an office setting

and allows for more extensive sampling of the prostate.

Urine cytology testing is ordered for patients experiencing hematuria. A cytotechnologist and pathologist team examine the prepared urine samples for cellular changes that may be caused by inflammation or changes that represent malignancy.

The urothelial carcinoma FISH molecular test can be used as an aid for initial diagnosis of urothelial cancer in patients and also for monitoring reoccurrence of bladder cancer in previously diagnosed patients.

Laboratory Services at CCH – Melrose

Submitted by: Trish Roehrl, Laboratory Manager

CentraCare Health – Melrose laboratory provides service to a 25 bed critical access hospital with an attached 75 bed long term care unit (Pine Villa Care Center), 61 senior housing and assisted living apartments (Park View Center), and the clinic for which there are eight providers.

The laboratory team is made up of five laboratory technical professionals with one laboratory manager on staff, all of whom rotate through call and weekends. A typical day in the Melrose laboratory begins at 5:30 a.m. when the "start up" and "phlebotomy" technicians commence with their workloads. The technician assigned to phlebotomy will draw hospital inpatients and Pine Villa residents. All of the hospital work is completed by 7:00 a.m. when the

laboratory then opens for clinic outpatients, resulting in anywhere from 15-50 patient visits.

Two additional techs arrive later in the morning to assist with the clinic volume through the clinic's closing schedule, with appointments going as late as 6:45 p.m. After clinic closing, the late technician begins their on-call schedule. They may be called to return to the laboratory with a patient admission to the emergency room.

The test menu consists of, but is not limited to, basic chemistry and immunoassay testing; complete blood counts, manual differentials and sedimentation rates in hematology; Prothrombin time, activated partial Thromboplastin time, and D-dimer in coagulation; urine and beta strep throat

cultures in microbiology; and basic transfusion services. Additional testing is referred to CentraCare Laboratory Services located at the St. Cloud Hospital as needed.

The laboratory team at CCH – Melrose gets to know their patients very well. It's one of the many benefits of working in a small facility, including knowing all of their health care team professionals (and many of their spouses). They remain connected with the community and influence population health through involvement with health fairs, career presentations to Melrose Area High School students, and offering a Direct Access Testing program for those individual wishing to more closely monitor their personal wellness efforts.

CCLS CONNECTION

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- Pamela Rakke
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2015 Minnesota Clinical Laboratory Collaborative

April 29 – May 1

Rochester Civic Center
30 Civic Drive SE
Rochester, MN 55904

This annual state-wide conference will allow opportunities for attendees to network with fellow laboratory professionals, participate in a variety of educational sessions, meet with vendors in the exhibit hall, raise laboratory scholarship funds through a silent auction and contribute to a charity event to sponsor the Boys and Girls Club of Rochester. The mission of the Boys and Girls Club of Rochester is to empower all young people, especially those who need them the most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring community members.

We hope you can join us!



For additional CLC meeting and registration information, visit www.asclsmn.org

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