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Subject:	LABORATORY REPORTING POLICY				
Approved by: Laboratory Executive Director, Ed Hughes (electronic signature)					
Approved by: Laboratory Medical Director, Mark P. Burton, MD (electronic signature)					

LABORATORY REPORTING POLICY

Tests results are released only to authorized persons and, if applicable, the individual responsible for using the test results and the laboratory that initially requested the test.

The official chart record for laboratory tests is the green Cumulative Report, (printed in the order of Lab, Micro, Blood Bank) which is updated and replaced after midnight each day if new data has been reported. Results are grouped according to traditional analytical sections and organized in a vertical format. Specimen collection dates/times print horizontally above vertically listed tests with a maximum of 4 specimens across the page. Repeat tests are added with the most recent first. Normal or expected ranges (differentiated by age and sex) are printed in the far right column of the report or added as a comment in the report. A numeric result accompanied by an "H" or "L" is abnormally high or low. A numeric result accompanied by an asterisk (*) with the "H" or "L" indicates that the abnormality is critical. A non-numeric result accompanied by a double asterisk (**) indicates that the result is abnormal. The pound sign (#) indicates a significant change since the previous result. The computer will automatically check "current" results against most recent results in the patient file; compare them and determine if there is a change greater than pre-determined limits for a specified number of days. Not all tests are monitored in this manner, only those deemed effective in maintaining close surveillance of the patient's condition. For a reference, the key to the flags is also printed at the bottom of the activity and cumulative reports.

For interim information, the Hospital Information System (HIS) receives results from the Laboratory Information System (LIS) as soon as they are verified. Stat results can be printed on networked printers at nursing stations. You can also learn the status of tests or obtain results through the computer terminal at the nursing units. If you need assistance querying HIS, contact WTH Help Desk, extension 16583.

Pathologist's consultations and special laboratory reports are charted by the lab at or before 16:30 daily.

The Discharge Cumulative report is the final summary report of all lab tests that were ordered during the patient's hospitalization. These are transmitted to HIM and are available for viewing in EPF upon patient discharge and a copy of test results completed following discharge will be sent to the submitting doctor's office.

Activity reports can also be generated through the Laboratory Information System to include all results for a specified day or only those since their last printing. Doctor reports include only patients on whom the doctor was named at order entry as the submitting physician. The doctor reports can be further sorted by location or alphabetically by patient names. Individual patient reports can also be obtained.

Verbal results are given to the physician or licensed caregiver. If either of these is unavailable results may be given to the authorized agent of the licensed caregiver as stated in Goal 2 of the Joint Commissions Perspectives on Patient Safety Goals. If a verbal report is given, the lab will document who the result was given to and they will be asked to read the result back to the lab to confirm communication.

When electronic resulting is interrupted it will be necessary to resort to a manual backup system.

In the event of delayed reporting, formal notification through the HIS terminal will be done. A Pathologist will be notified of the delay in order to determine if the physician should be notified.