

Interventional Procedural Specimen Tracking

The Problem

The underlying problem that precipitated this project was multiple instances of lost, misrouted or severely delayed irreplaceable specimens bound for the Departments of Pathology, Cytology and Microbiology from various Interventional Procedural areas in the Medical Center. Lost specimens were generally caused by the lack of the use of a log book that could be periodically checked to verify that specimens were processed properly within the department and then were successfully transported to their eventual location. Delayed specimens were generally caused by the use of Lab Control as an intermediary stop while being transported to their final destination. Misrouted specimens were generally caused by the unnecessary sorting process that occurred while a specimen was temporarily stored in the Lab Control location.

Aim/Goal

The goal of this project was to implement a standardized minimum level of tracking, reconciliation and transport process functionality for all Interventional Procedural areas of the Medical Center that collect potentially irreplaceable tissue and cell specimens bound for the Department of Pathology and Cytology.

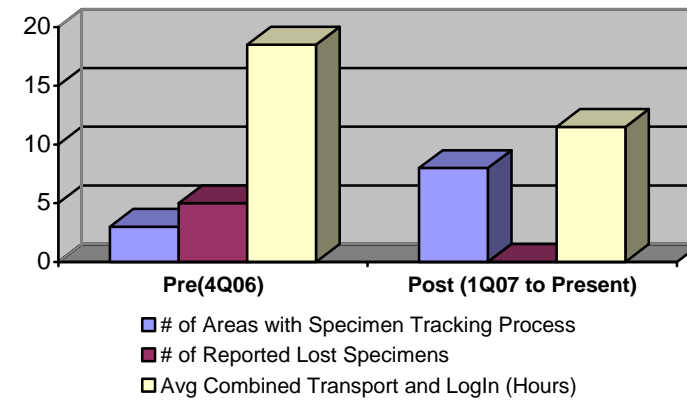
The Team

- Healthcare Quality Process Improvement/Patient Safety
- Gastrointestinal Medicine
- Interventional Pulmonology
- OB/GYN
- Radiology
- Urology
- Dermatology
- Pathology
- Transport Services / Motor Services

The Interventions

- Use of Specimen Tracking Log Sheet in all Procedural Areas.
- Reconciliation Process to ensure that all labeling actions occurred
- Use of Courier sign out column to indicate that each individual specimen successfully left the department
- Use of Direct route transport to avoid use of Lab Control as intermediary stop.

The Results/Progress to Date



Lessons Learned

- The standardization of practice of specimen tracking across all of the Interventional Procedural Departments in the Medical Center. **Log sheet usage from 3 areas to 8.**
- The use of a centralized comprehensive log for all specimens collected in all Interventional Procedural areas. The use of a reconciliation process to ensure the record of a disposition for all collected specimens. The standardization of a record of courier sign out for all individual specimens collected. **Number of lost specimens in Q1 from 5 to 0 for all areas in subsequent areas. No subsequent lost specimens from Interventional Procedure areas to date Q12008.**
- The exclusion of the unnecessary use of Lab Control for all Pathology, Cytology and Microbiology bound specimens through the implementation of "Direct Route Transport".
- The reduction in the chance of the loss or misrouting of specimens as a result of the elimination of the use of the intermediary stop of Lab Control.
- **A 38% reduction in the amount of time** between when the specimen is left for transport and when the specimen is imputed in Pathology / Cytology / Microbiology in period following implementation.



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