

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

NEW NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TIMELY COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION OF NEWBORN SCREENING SPECIMENS

In February 2015, the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children (ACHDNC) formalized a series of recommendations regarding timeliness in newborn screening. These recommendations included:

1. Initial NBS specimens should be collected in the appropriate time frame for the newborn's condition but no later than 48 hours after birth, and
2. NBS specimens should be received at the laboratory as soon as possible; ideally **within 24 hours of collection**.

The ultimate goal is for the DSHS Newborn Screening Laboratory to have results on the initial screen by five days of life for the most time critical disorders and to have all results ready by seven days of life.

Currently the DSHS Laboratory receives approximately 25% of initial newborn screening specimens within 24 hours of collection. **Our current goal is to increase the percentage of initial newborn screening specimens received within 24 hours of collection to 60% statewide.** Going forward, the Spotlight Award measures will include % of specimens received within 1 day of collection.

What can you do to meet this goal?

- Use the monthly facility report cards frequently to assess and monitor your facility performance, particularly on specimen transit times.
- Adjust specimen collection processes so that collections are completed:
 - When the patient is between 24 and 48 hours of age.
 - At least 4-5 hours before scheduled courier pick up to allow time for drying and shipment preparation. (Many successful hospitals schedule NBS collections during the overnight shift to ensure the specimens are dried and ready for shipment on time.)
- Identify internal processes that may delay shipment and apply improvements.
- Raise staff awareness of online DSHS educational materials and facility report cards.
- Assign specific staff members 7 days a week to:
 - Gather specimens 1 hour before scheduled courier pickup.
 - Ensure all specimens collected in the facility are included in the next possible courier shipment.
 - Ensure courier documentation is completed correctly.
- Contact the Newborn Screening Laboratory for any needed assistance at 1-888-963-7111 ext. 7585 or NewbornScreeningLab@dshs.state.tx.us.

Questions? Contact the Texas DSHS NBS Laboratory:
Call toll free: 1-888-963-7111 ext. 7333 or for local calls 512-776-7333
Email: LabInfo@dshs.state.tx.us