

SFHHCS8

Prepare specimens /samples for biological investigations



Overview

This standard applies to the process by which biological specimens/samples of all types are prepared in the pre-analytical stages of investigation. This standard covers the pre-analytical preparation for microscopic, diagnostic, therapeutic and/or analytical investigations. This will take place in the laboratory or designated areas. The process should ensure that specimens/samples are kept in optimal conditions to maintain their integrity that they are uniquely identified and can be retrieved for follow up procedures. Specimens/samples should be handled in a manner consistent with relevant and current guidelines, regulations and legislation.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 work within your level of competence, responsibility and accountability
- P2 apply appropriate health and safety measures, infection prevention and control and personal protective equipment to minimise the risks associated with the preparation procedure
- P3 confirm specimen/samples' suitability for processing and clarify any reason for referral with relevant individuals
- P4 ensure documentation relating to specimen /sample is accurate, complete and entered into relevant information systems
- P5 prioritise preparation of specimens and samples according to urgency of request and other influencing factors
- P6 check the equipment it is operating at the required performance level and seek assistance if this is outside your level of responsibility
- P7 follow procedures for the correct method of preparation
- P8 prepare specimens/samples to meet requirements of intended analysis, maintaining its unique identification throughout the process
- P9 take appropriate action to deal with leakage, spillage, breakage or other contingency during preparation and seek advice from colleagues where repeat specimens/samples are required
- P10 place the prepared specimen/sample in correct environment and location for the follow up procedures
- P11 report any factors which may influence the effective preparation of the specimens/samples within your work practice to the relevant individual
- P12 maintain full, accurate and legible records of information and store in correct location in line with current legislation, guidelines, local policies and protocols

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 your own level of competence, authority and knowledge base related to the preparation of specimens/ samples
- K2 the range of health and safety measures, infection prevention and control required for the preparation procedure within your work practice
- K3 the need to maintain the individuals' confidentiality and where appropriate their authorisation for their specimens/samples relevant to your work practice
- K4 why it is important to maintain the link between specimens/samples and documentation and the implications of failure to do so
- K5 the minimum data acceptable for identification of the individual's request form and corresponding specimen/sample
- K6 how to deal with mismatched or inadequately identified specimens/samples and requests
- K7 the importance of the unique identifier for specimens/samples and the methods of ensuring unique identification
- K8 the need to enter accurate documentation relating to specimen /sample into relevant information systems
- K9 how to identify urgent specimen/samples and/or those requiring referral within your work practice
- K10 the factors affecting the integrity, safety and quality of specimens during preparation
- K11 the implications of leakage, spillage, breakage or damage prior to or during preparation, the actions required and where to seek advice if this is outside your level of responsibility
- K12 the range, types and correct use of equipment and procedures used in the preparation of specimens/samples
- K13 why it is important to quality check the equipment and ensure it is fit for purpose and operating safely
- K14 the range and types of specimens/samples for preparation within your work practice and level of responsibility
- K15 the need to follow the relevant protocols for preparation and storage of specimens/samples and for the disposal of waste materials
- K16 the range of containers, conditions and locations used to prepare specimens/samples for the follow up procedures within your work practice
- K17 the current national legislation, local guidelines, local policies and protocols which affect your work practice
- K18 the policies and guidance that clarify your scope of practice, accountabilities and the working relationship between yourself and others

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Additional Information

External Links

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: HWB8 Biomedical investigation and intervention

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