

The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) provides advice to the profession to support regulated members in implementing the CPSA Standards of Practice. This advice does not define a standard of practice, nor should it be interpreted as legal advice.

Advice to the Profession documents are dynamic and may be edited or updated for clarity at any time. Please refer back to these articles regularly to ensure you are aware of the most recent advice. Major changes will be communicated to our members; however, minor edits may only be noted within the documents.

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CPSA’s Advice to the Profession documents cannot capture every potential scenario a member may encounter. Regulated members are expected to consider standards of practice and advice documents in the context of individual patients in each care encounter. Regulated members are expected to do their best to meet the spirit and intent of the standards and advice, while focusing on providing the best quality care possible.

## Preamble

Incomplete information on laboratory requisitions can delay communication with regulated members, which is especially important in more serious and life-threatening medical conditions. Insufficient, incorrect or illegible information on requisition forms can directly affect the processing and analysis of the specimens. It may lead to incorrect diagnostic and therapeutic decisions, misinterpretation of results, and impair meaningful comments from the clinical laboratory. These documentation scenarios can foreseeably result in increased risk to patients as well as the potential for medico-legal liability to

members. Appropriately filled laboratory forms allow for timely communication of critical results to regulated members providing early intervention and improved patient care.<sup>1</sup>

We understand regulated members are busy with exceedingly limited time to perform certain tasks; however, it is crucial to maintain proper documentation practices to ensure efficient and error-free processing of lab tests. This helps mitigate patient risk and reduces the potential for complaints while improving patient care and satisfaction, as well as the experience for healthcare providers.

As part of Alberta Health Services' [Connect Care](#) roll-out, community-based providers and clinics must use [provider and submitter identifiers](#) when ordering lab tests and diagnostic imaging requisitions.

## Continuity of care

Under the [Continuity of Care](#) standard of practice, regulated members are responsible for any investigation they order; currently, almost half of lab requests across the province (including requisitions for microbiology and anatomic pathology) are missing the provider ID and/or submitter ID which makes it very difficult for results to be delivered in a timely manner.

The provincial laboratory continues to deal with **approximately 3,000 requisitions** a day that have incomplete or inaccurate information ultimately resulting in delays of test result delivery.

Lab teams work diligently to find the missing information and deliver results as soon as possible, but this causes delays and has the potential to impact patient care.

For [Alberta Precision Labs](#) (APL) to return results in a timely manner, the requisition must include:

- the regulated member's full name;
- address (including postal code) of the office/clinic/facility;
- phone and fax numbers; and
- provider ID and submitter ID (find your IDs [here](#))<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> From Annals of Biomedical Sciences' "[The lab requisition form: A vital tool for quality patient care](#)" (Aug. 12, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> If you do not yet have a provider or submitter ID, you can request one through the [Request for Provider/Prescriber Set-Up in Health Information Systems](#).

Community providers can use either [DynaLIFE](#) or [Alberta Precision Labs](#) (APL) requisitions while an integrated single requisition is being finalized. Results are delivered in real-time to Netcare and to patients via [MyHealth Records](#) and [MyAHS Connect](#).

While all regulated members have a commitment to professional excellence, as outlined in the [Code of Ethics & Professionalism](#), collaboration and commitment to delivering comprehensive and accurate lab requisitions will enhance continuity of care and reduce the risk of patient harm.

**1. Providing complete and accurate contact information is essential to ensuring you receive your laboratory results where and when you need them.**

Ensure the ordering- and copy-to-provider information is complete and correct:

- a. Requisitions require the Connect Care Provider and Submitter Identification Numbers (find your IDs [here](#))
- b. Ensure provider information in Connect Care is accurate<sup>3</sup>
- c. Ensure provider information in the [CPSA Physician Directory](#) is accurate (updates can be done through the [Physician Portal](#))

Resources

- [Delivery of Results to Community-based Providers from Connect Care](#)
- [Request for Provider/Prescriber Set-Up in Health Information Systems](#)
- [For Clinics](#)
- [AUTH: LOGIN](#)
- [Provider ID lookup](#)

**2. Ensuring laboratory orders are completed correctly is essential to ensuring you receive the right results on the right patient.**

Laboratory Requisitions:

- a. Ensure the correct requisition for the tests being ordered is used

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<sup>3</sup> Use the [Request for Provider/Provider Setup in Health Information Systems](#) form to update this information if incorrect. A [form completion guide](#) is available.

- i. Resource: [Requisitions](#)
  - b. Ensure the demographic portion of the requisition is fully completed
    - i. Resource: [Requisition Completion Aid](#)
  - c. Ensure the correct test(s) are selected or clearly indicated on the requisition
    - i. Resource: [Specimen Acceptance & Identification](#)
  - d. Additional considerations:
    - i. Physician Operating Systems may not be kept up to date with the most current version of requisitions.
    - ii. Administrative/clinic staff may be completing requisitions and need to be aware of these requirements
- 3. Failing to provide the required information to the laboratory may result in:**
- a. Delay in collecting and processing specimens
  - b. Result Routing - delayed or incorrect
  - c. Critical result notification - delayed or called to incorrect numbers

## Resources

CPSA team members are available to discuss questions or concerns. Please contact [support@cpsa.ab.ca](mailto:support@cpsa.ab.ca).

## RELATED STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

- [Continuity of Care](#)
- [Code of Ethics & Professionalism](#)
- [Patient Record Content](#)
- [Referral Consultation](#)
- [Responsibility for a Medical Practice](#)

## COMPANION RESOURCES

- Advice to the Profession documents:
  - [Continuity of Care](#)
  - [Responsibility for a Medical Practice](#)
- CMPA's [The Most Responsible Physician](#)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was written in collaboration with [APL](#).