



## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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Commissioner, DSHS

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May 30, 2007

Re: Newborn Screening Laboratory - Report Cards on Specimen Quality

Dear Submitter,

The DSHS Laboratory Services Section is pleased to introduce Newborn Screening Report Cards to assist in monitoring and improving your newborn screening collection procedures. The enclosed report card provides information on specimens received from your facility in 2006; however, future reports will be mailed on a quarterly basis.

The report card summarizes two (2) major quality indicators; the number of unsatisfactory specimens and the time from specimen collection to receipt in the laboratory. Please see the information below on interpreting the report.

**Submitter Statistics** are located in the top right corner of the report and provide an overview of the quality and timeliness of specimens received from your facility.

**Submitter Category:**

Submitting facilities are divided into three (3) categories based on average submissions per month; HIGH for 150 or more, MEDIUM for 21-149, and LOW for 20 or less.

**Specimen Quality:**

This statistic compares the number of unsatisfactory specimens submitted by your facility within the report timeframe to the total number of specimens submitted. The number in parenthesis is your unsatisfactory specimen ratio.

**Transit Time:**

This statistic compares the number of specimens submitted by your facility that were rejected due to arrival at the laboratory after the 13<sup>th</sup> day from collection to the total number of specimens submitted. The day the specimen is collected is counted as day 1.

**Your Rank for Specimen Quality:**

Your ranking among all submitters in your Submitter Category (Low, Medium, High) is provided, with number 1 indicating the highest rank.

The **Unsatisfactory Specimen Quality** table provides a monthly breakdown of the total number of specimens submitted, the total number of unsatisfactory specimens, and the resulting unsatisfactory ratio. Your monthly total is defined as the number of specimens received in the laboratory within the month.

The table includes information on the specific reasons a specimen was deemed unsatisfactory (unsatisfactory codes). One specimen may have up to three (3) unsatisfactory codes so the total number of codes within the table may be greater than your total number of unsatisfactory specimens.

The **Time from Collection to Receipt** table provides a monthly breakdown by the day your specimens were received in the laboratory. Categories range from “Great” received on day 1-3 to “Rejected” received on day 14 or after.

Receiving a properly collected specimen in a timely manner has always been critical, but even more so with the expanded panel. Over fourteen disorders can be life threatening within the first week of life, and unsatisfactory or delayed specimens could lead to serious consequences for an infant. Please make sure specimens are shipped as quickly as possible within 24 hours of collection.

For program comparisons, report cards also include summary statistics from other submitters with similar specimen submission quantities and from all Texas submitters.

For more information, please contact the Newborn Screening Laboratory by calling **1-888-963-7111 x 6030** or E-mail [LabInfo@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:LabInfo@dshs.state.tx.us)

Sincerely,



Susan U. Neill, Ph.D., MBA  
Director, Laboratory Services Section