Reference Laboratory Interface Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does the Electronic Health Record work with the uni-directional interface?

   No, the uni-directional interface is designed to bypass the RPMS Laboratory package and input laboratory results directly into the Patient Care Component (PCC) of the RPMS system. The laboratory data transmitted to PCC is designed as a replacement for PCC Data Entry and provides lab results through the Health Summary and database searches such as Q-Man. Since the uni-directional interface bypasses the RPMS Laboratory package, test results are not viewable using EHR.

2. Does the Electronic Health Record work with the bi-directional interface?

   Yes. Facilities using the RPMS Laboratory system will be able to place laboratory orders using the EHR. When those orders are accessioned in the laboratory package, they are sent as an electronic file to the designated reference laboratory. Test results are then received, reviewed, and verified using the RPMS Laboratory package. Test results are then available in all normal laboratory report options and are viewable in the EHR.

3. Our site currently uses the uni-directional interface, can we upgrade to the bi-directional version?

   Yes. A site can convert to the bi-directional interface; however there are some factors to consider. First your site will have to plan on utilizing the RPMS laboratory package. OIT highly recommends sending laboratory personnel to Basic Laboratory package training to familiarize them with the lab package. OIT also recommends that users attend Reference Laboratory Interface training to learn how to setup and maintain a bi-directional interface once activated.

4. How long does it take for a site to become interfaced?

   Based on OIT experience with beta test sites, it takes approximately 6-10 weeks once a site makes the decision to pursue implementing the reference laboratory interface. Reasons for this include staffing, communication with the reference laboratory, resource issues on the reference laboratory side, test creation, test mapping, etc.

5. Who should attend training?

   Individuals who are responsible for the maintenance of the RPMS laboratory package training should attend. In addition, in their absence a person of similar capabilities should also attend and they will serve as backup to the primary lab package administrator.

6. Should IT people also attend the training?

   Almost all of the setup and maintenance of the reference laboratory interface will be performed by laboratory personnel. Tasks such as building data names, building test files in File 60, etc., are performed primarily by laboratory technicians familiar with the laboratory package. If a site manager is interested they are welcome to attend but past experience is that most site managers will not be interested in the material after the first day of training.

7. When setting up tests in F60, is it required that we have entries in Site/Specimen and Collection Sample fields for the bidirectional interface?

   Those fields are required for tests that are type "both." Tests that are "output" only, because they are members of a panel, need a site/specimen (so that you can define units

and LOINC codes) but do not need a collection sample, as the collection sample will be chosen when the parent test is ordered. Type “input” tests do need collections samples defined.

8. For a site that may be doing some in-house testing, should I have different Urine Glucose, Urine Protein, etc., for the reference lab results?

   I would as they may eventually go to a bidirectional interface and the way the results or the units are reported may not be the same. For example on site, they may report urine dipstick results using the "+" system whereas the ref lab uses semi-quantitative, e.g. 30, 100, 200 mg/dL.

9. Is the Institution and Accession area entry needed for every test or just the Cosmic tests?

   For bidirectional interfaces, the Institution and Accession area are required for type "Input" and type "Both," but are not required for type "Output" as the parent test that is ordered will define the Institution and Accession Area for all tests in that panel.

10. Each result must have a data name. Is a Glucose a Glucose a Glucose, or do we have to have a unique Glucose data name for every type of Glucose (result code) there is?

    Yes, if a reference lab defines a test with a separate result code, then we must create a separate test complete with a separate data name in the Laboratory Test file. That means that the reference lab does not equate those tests for some reason. It is the Data name that the Laboratory Package uses to file the result.