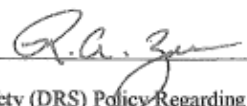




## Memorandum

Date: March 20, 2006

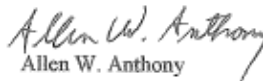
From: Area 3 Health Physicist

Through: NIH Radiation Safety Officer 

Subject: New Division of Radiation Safety (DRS) Policy Regarding Patient Specimen Labeling

To: Dr. Gyorgy Csako, Department of Laboratory Medicine

1. Any time a patient sample comes to the DLM labeled as radioactive, it should be treated and disposed as radioactive waste or checked with a meter to determine if the label is still needed. If the sample only reads background, the label can be removed.
2. Specimens collected from patients who have undergone diagnostic nuclear medicine studies no longer need to be labeled as radioactive. Furthermore, the Department of Nuclear Medicine will no longer be labeling charts of patients who have had these studies.
3. Specimens taken from patients who received therapeutic amounts of a radionuclide are required to be labeled and disposed of as radioactive waste. The Department of Nuclear Medicine will continue to label charts of these patients.
4. Labeled compounds used in research which need to be checked for pyrogenicity and sterility should be labeled as radioactive and disposed as radioactive waste.
5. If a patient specimen needs to be transported off the NIH campus, the DLM must determine whether or not it is radioactive. In most cases, this can be accomplished by surveying the samples with a radiation detection meter. If a radioactive sample must be transported off-campus, it must be prepared for transport by the DRS Material Control and Analysis Branch (MCAB) to ensure that all Department of Transportation regulations are met. MCAB can be contacted at 301-496-3277.
6. Universal Precautions are adequate when handling low-level radioactive specimens.
7. Radiation dosimeters are unnecessary for Clinical Pathology staff due to the low levels of radioactivity, rapid decay, and limited time of exposure.
8. All DLM personnel are still required to take the specialized online radiation safety training.
9. Contact the Clinical Area Health Physicist at 301-496-5774 for precautions on handling specimens in which the radiation level is in question.

  
Allen W. Anthony