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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** Monday March 17, 2014

**TO:** St. Joseph's Nurse Managers and Educators

**CC:** Hamilton General Hospital Microbiology Staff

**FROM:** Drs. C. Lee, D. Yamamura and C. Main

**RE:** Specimens Ordered for Bacterial Culture and Sensitivities

**EFFECTIVE:** Monday March 17, 2014

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Hello,

We have been assessing the appropriateness of some of specimens ordered for bacterial culture and sensitivities.

One of the specimens which requires attention is chest drain fluid ordered as pleural fluid. The microbiology lab continues to receive pleural fluid drain ordered as pleural fluid. This results in obtaining erroneous results and likely lead to inappropriate utilization of antibiotics. In order for the microbiology lab to work-up these specimens appropriately, would you ensure that the drain fluid is ordered as drain fluid and NOT as pleural fluid.

The only samples which should be ordered and labelled as pleural fluid are the ones obtained during a thoracentesis.

This will improve overall turn-around-time of obtaining results and enhance antimicrobial stewardship.

Thank you for your time and please feel free to contact myself, Drs. Deborah Yamamura or Cheryl Main.

Thank you very much.

Christine Lee, MD, FRCP  
Medical Director, Microbiology, HRLMP