

INDEX NO: **Practice Direction
16.18**

SUBJECT: **Ordering Lab Tests - Critical Values**

APPROVAL BY COUNCIL: **June 1, 2016**

UPDATED:

Background

Health care providers must be authorized in legislation to order screening and diagnostic tests. Under the *Registered Dietitians Act (2002)*, registered dietitians in Manitoba do not have independent authority to order screening or diagnostic tests.

Diagnostic Services Manitoba (DSM) has specific requirements related to reporting of critical values, therefore all labwork must be ordered on behalf of a physician.

Definition

Critical Value - a patient test result, exceeding defined limits that is potentially life threatening or may cause significant harm to the patient, if not acted upon by a physician or other clinical personnel responsible for patient care. These patients may require urgent evaluation / action by the physician/designate. ¹

Guideline

1. Per DSM policy 10-50-04 and legislation, only authorized persons may order screening and diagnostic tests. ²
2. Since dietitians do not have independent authority to order screening or diagnostic tests, a delegation of function from a physician is required for dietitians to order labwork.
3. Per DSM policy 100-10-06, all critical values must be reported to the physician directly responsible for the patients care. ¹
4. Due to the above requirement for reporting of critical values, all labwork must be ordered on behalf of a physician.

References

1. Diagnostic Services Manitoba. Policy 100-0-06 Reporting Critical Values. November 2013.
2. Diagnostic Services Manitoba. Policy 10-50-04 Authorization to Order Diagnostic Tests. Revised January 2012.