

Assessment of the Burden of Uncollected Test Reports at the Laboratory of Teaching Hospital Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

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Uncollected laboratory test reports are a major problem in clinical laboratories in Sri Lanka. Apart from the negative effects on patient management, this is a waste of financial and human resources. Although this is a well-known problem in Sri Lankan government hospitals, there are no published studies to assess the scale of the problem. Hence, a cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted intending to assess the number of uncollected laboratory reports and the reasons for non-collection in the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya (THP). All uncollected test reports in all laboratory sections at THP during the year 2019 were included in the study. The total number of uncollected test reports at THP during 2019 was 25,716 (2.43%). The number of uncollected reports from biochemistry, haematology, immunology, microbiology, urine analysis, histology/cytology and serology sections were 15,591 (60.6%), 6,952 (27.0%), 1,066 (4.1%), 880 (3.4%), 832 (3.2%), 275 (1.1%) and 120 (0.5%), respectively. The highest number of uncollected test reports were observed for Full Blood Count (FBC) test (5,434, 2.78%) and the highest percentage was identified for Ferritin reports (161, 26.52%). The other tests with higher rates of non-collection were Serum Electrophoresis (19.76%), Free T3 (19.04%), HbA1c (11.48%) TSH (10.20%) and PSA (10.11%). Improper filling of the sample request form *i.e.* illegible hand writing, not writing the name of the patient properly, not including the sampling unit, and poor patient awareness on the importance of the clinical laboratory tests were some of the identified reasons for non-collection. In conclusion, 2.4% of the reports have not been collected and the highest percentages were observed for routine tests such as FBC test. Significant percentages of the non-collection were observed for more costly immunological tests. The establishment of an appropriate Laboratory Information Management Systems possibly will improve this problem.

Keywords: Laboratory reports, Uncollected reports, Teaching Hospital Peradeniya