



Swaziland Health Laboratory Service

National Sample

Transportation System (NSTS)

Policy and Procedure Manual



Date of Implementation: 04 January 2016

APPROVAL PAGE

SHLS NATIONAL SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL PAGE	2
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL REVIEW.....	3
ABBREVIATIONS	6
1. INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1 OVERVIEW	7
1.2 MISSION STATEMENT.....	7
1.3 OBJECTIVES.....	7
1.4 SCOPE OF THE QUALITY MANUAL.....	8
2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	8
2.1 ORGANISATION AND PROCEDURES	8
2.2 ORGANISATIONAL CHART	9
2.3 PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES.....	10
2.4 MANAGEMENT REVIEWS AND PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS	13
3. SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES	14
4. VEHICLES USE AND AUTHORISATION.....	15
5. SAMPLE TRANSPORT PROCESS.....	17
6. NSTS ASSESSMENTS	20
7. NSTS PERSONNEL	21
8. NSTS Information Management.....	24

ABBREVIATIONS

NSTS	National sample Transportation Service
NMRL	National Molecular Reference Laboratory
SHLS	Swaziland Health Laboratory Services
ISO	International Standard Organisation
IATA	International Air Transport Association
EQA	External Quality Assurance
NQAU	National Quality Assurance Unit
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
TAT	Turn-Around-Time
CTA	Central Transport Administration
MoH	Ministry of Health

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

The National Sample Transportation System (NSTS) is a government managed sample transportation system that creates a link between the laboratories and health facilities. As part of the diagnostic services arm of the Swaziland Health Laboratory Service (SHLS), the NSTS aims to improve health care service delivery by increasing access to laboratory diagnostics through provision of an effective laboratory sample transportation system in Swaziland.

1.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The NSTS strives to provide a patient focused service that is appropriate, timely, efficient, safe and reliable for all patients that seek laboratory diagnostic services, and more especially in the remote health facilities, so as to support and promote the quality of health care in Swaziland.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the NSTS is to provide and maintain the most appropriate, safe, reliable, timely and efficient sample transport service that allows the Swaziland Health Laboratory Services to provide a better service to their customers, the patients.

This will be achieved through;

- a) Providing a centrally managed transportation system for all patient samples from all health facilities in the supported regions (Hhohho, Manzini, Shiselweni and Lubombo) by June 2020 and beyond.
- b) Improved access to laboratory diagnostic services in Swaziland by visiting each supported health facility in all the supported regions at least once a week.
- c) Preserve the quality of samples and ensure their timely delivery to testing laboratories through the use of appropriate sample handling and transportation procedures and practices according to the National Sample Transportation Service Manual as well as the ISO 15190, 15189 and ISO 22870 standards.
- d) The transportation of results back to the health facility within 3 days after the Referral testing laboratory has released the result.
- e) Prioritization of customer satisfaction by conducting customer surveys bi-annually and targeting an average customer satisfaction score of 80% for each region.

- f) Participating in internal and external NSTS assessments and monitoring of determined NSTS indicators in order to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory and safety requirements.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE QUALITY MANUAL

This manual specifies the requirements for quality and competence in different operations and functions of the NSTS. All personnel involved with Sample Transport will familiarise themselves with the quality requirements detailed in this document.

The Manual will be used for the following:

- i. **Internal Use**- to communicate to health facility and laboratory staff on the NSTS policy and procedures so as to make the staff familiar with the processes used to achieve compliance with quality requirements. This communication should help facilitate the implementation and maintenance of quality management systems. The manual should also facilitate effective communication and control of quality related activities and a documented base for a quality system audits.
- ii. **External Use** - to inform the NSTS external partners/stakeholders as well as health facilities about its policies and procedures as well as its implemented quality management systems and measures of compliance with expected quality standards. It is also aimed to help advocate support for resources to ensure that the NSTS is meeting its role in health care delivery.

2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

2.1 ORGANISATION AND PROCEDURES

The NSTS Manager has the authority, competence and responsibility to:

1. Ensure smooth running of the NSTS through the provision of administrative support (Planning, Budgeting and Administration related to the NSTS)
2. Supervise NSTS field staff in carrying out their duties
3. Gather information and facilitate the establishment of work linkages between the NSTS and other stakeholders.

The NSTS Manager works closely with and reports to the National Laboratory Administrator and Chief Technologist to ensure:

- i. There are no activities that could compromise NSTS performance or service delivery;
- ii. There are appropriate procedures to ensure ethical respect of patient samples and confidentiality of patient information;
- iii. Duties and responsibilities of NSTS personnel are defined;
- iv. Appropriate communication is established within the NSTS, Laboratories and other stakeholders.

2.2 ORGANISATIONAL CHART

The NSTS organization consists of Phlebotomists, a Senior Phlebotomist/Data Clerk and the NSTS Manager. This team is supported by Regional Laboratory Managers, Principal Technologists at the National Reference Laboratory, the National Laboratory Administrator and Chief Medical Technologist. The organisational chart including support is as seen in the diagram below.

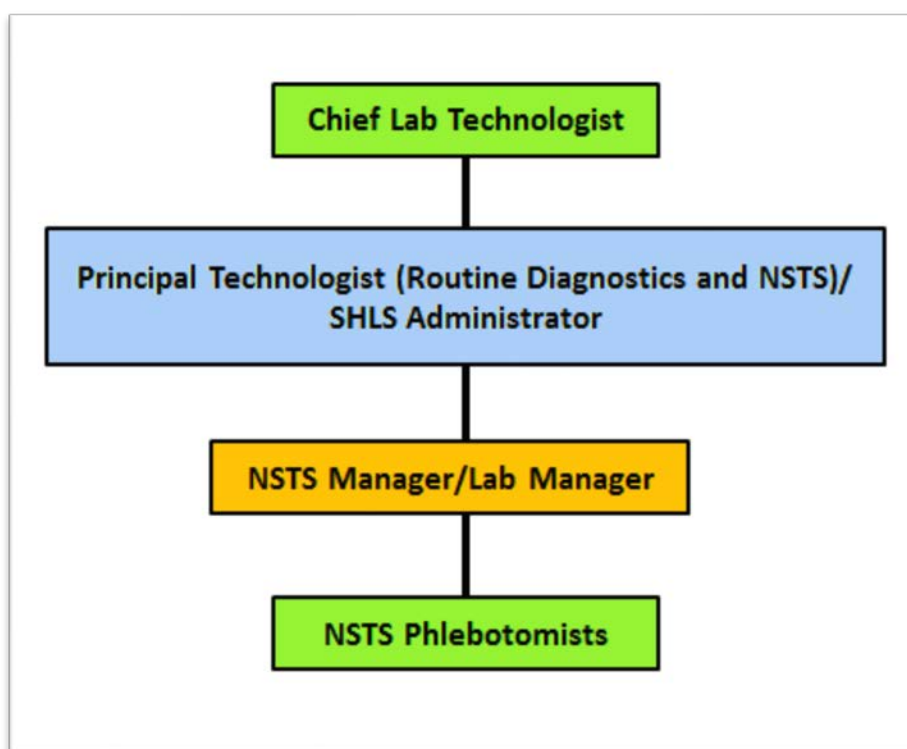


Fig. 1: National Sample Transport Service Organogram

With the support of the regional laboratory managers, Principal Technologist at the National Reference Laboratory, the SHLS Administrator and the Chief Lab Technologist; the NSTS Manager ensures appropriate communication takes place between the NSTS and the serviced health facilities as well as to keep the Phlebotomists informed through scheduled monthly meetings or unscheduled update meetings when necessary. Monthly meetings (and

unscheduled meetings) are held with all NSTS personnel (NSTS Phlebotomists and, at times, with the **SHLS management**- Chief Lab Technologist, Administrator and Principal Technologist).

During the meetings:

- i. There are updates or debriefing on the vehicles status, traveling schedule and discussion on challenges faced at each facility by the NSTS Phlebotomists and any recommendations on the way forward are noted.
- ii. Assignments for the upcoming month (e.g. transportation of HIV referral forms, EQA samples and laboratory statistics)
- iii. Minutes (notes) are taken of meetings discussions, followed by a written report to management more especially for any specific issues that need their support and assistance to be addressed. See Meetings Minutes. Any action items will be followed up where possible before the next meeting is held and relevant updates will be given to relevant stakeholders (*refer to Meetings Management SOP NSTS-S2 and Meetings Minutes Form (NSTS-F1)*)
- iv. If necessary, communication through Memo's that are approved by the Chief Lab Technologist will also be circulated to relevant stakeholders.

2.3. PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES

2.3.1 Chief Technologist

The Chief Technologist, located at the National Reference Laboratory complex, is responsible for providing support and operational direction to the NSTS. The Chief Technologist may delegate selected duties to qualified personnel; however he/she shall maintain the ultimate responsibility for the overall operation of the NSTS.

The Chief Lab Technologist (or designee) shall:

- a) Ensure management support to ensure that there are appropriate numbers of staff with the required education, training and competence to provide sample transportation services that meet the needs and requirements of the users.
- b) Engage, on behalf of the NSTS, with applicable accrediting and regulatory agencies, appropriate administrative officials, the healthcare community and the patient population served, as well as providers of formal agreements when required.

- c) Assist in the design and implementation of contingency plans to ensure that essential services are available even during emergency situations.

2.3.2 Principal Technologist (Routine Diagnostics and NSTS)

The Principal Technologist shall:

- a) Provide support to the NSTS, including budget planning and financial management according to the SHLS assignments of these responsibilities.
- b) Monitor implementation of and adherence to this policy.
- c) Assist in addressing any complaints, requests or suggestions from staff and or users of the NSTS services that cannot otherwise be adopted by the NSTS Manager.
- d) Provide a communication link between the Chief Lab Technologist, NSTS Manager and Laboratory Managers at testing facilities.

2.3.3 NSTS Manager

The NSTS Manager shall:

- a) Provide overall supervision of the NSTS staff.
- b) Authorize the traveling of the NSTS vehicles.
- c) Oversee any vehicle service and maintenance and related outcomes.
- d) Monitor vehicle breakdown episodes or incidences and report to Chief Laboratory Technologist and any other relevant authorities as needed.
- e) Establish and maintain strong ties with the government Central Transport Administration to ensure a well maintained NSTS vehicle fleet.
- f) Provide strategic information and reports regarding the NSTS.
- g) Monitor routine schedules to ensure adherence to the expected turn-around- time (TAT) and quality standards.
- h) Facilitate or advocate for external and internal training and manage quality improvement projects for the NSTS as well as ensure Personnel files for each NSTS staff reflects all trainings attended and any qualifications obtained pertaining to NSTS work is appropriately documented.
- i) Use NSTS M&E data to improve services and share this data with SHLS Management to advocate for any resources required for the NSTS to carry out its duties.

2.3.4 Laboratory Manager

The Laboratory Manager shall:

- a) Provides technical advice on laboratory quality procedures to NSTS personnel stationed at the Facilities
- b) Reports or informs the NSTS Manager of any significant problems which he/she becomes aware of in the laboratory that can affect NSTS operations or require NSTS support.
- c) Oversees all facility-based sample transport staff performance on a day to day basis

2.3.5 Senior Phlebotomist/NSTS Data Clerk

The NSTS Senior Phlebotomist/Data Clerk shall:

- a) Provide necessary assistance to the NSTS Manager.
- b) Document vehicle breakdown episodes or incidences and report to the NSTS Manager
- c) Receive weekly copies of NSTS logbooks to enter into an electronic database as requested by the NSTS Manager.
- d) Schedule vehicle maintenance bookings to ensure all NSTS fleet are well maintained and provide feedback to the NSTS Manager.
- e) Double as a back-up Phlebotomist when needed
- f) Compile vehicle maintenance reports and data reports that will be used for M&E purposes.
- g) Submit all relevant documentation required for Personnel file including any training or qualification pertinent to sample transportation duties.

2.3.6 NSTS Phlebotomist

The NSTS Phlebotomist shall:

- a) Travel on predetermined routes to pick up all types of patient samples from health facilities and transport them to designated referral laboratories for testing/analysis.
- b) Return test results from the designated referral laboratories to the health facilities in a timely manner and observing confidentiality of these results.
- c) Maintain transport and sample logbooks and provide regular reports to the NSTS Manager.
- d) Document vehicle breakdown episodes or incidences and report to the NSTS Manager

- e) Develop and maintain a good relationship with a point of contact at each health facility and, when needed, help mentor the individual on collecting high quality samples, and reject any samples on site that do not meet the testing requirements.
- f) Maintain integrity of samples during transportation (*refer to Sample Handling, Packaging and Transportation SOP NSTS-S16*)
- g) Submit all relevant documentation required for Personnel file including any training or qualification pertinent to sample transportation duties.

2.3.7 New Staff Members

New staff members will be oriented on the NSTS Policies and Procedures during their first weeks of joining the team. The orientation will cover all relevant areas and processes that they will be involved with to ensure that quality of services is maintained and continually improved. All new staff members will also undergo internal training to help them become more familiar with their duties. (*refer to Staff Orientation Checklist NSTS-F11*)

2.3 MANAGEMENT REVIEWS AND PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

2.4.1 Management Reviews

Routine evaluations of the NSTS systems set forth in this document will be conducted annually through management reviews aimed to ensure that the quality management systems are maintained and relevant to meet the objectives of the NSTS. The inputs of the Management reviews will include

- i. Changes in the volume and scope of work and/or personnel that could affect the quality management system
- ii. Staff suggestions (including those made during routine meetings)
- iii. Quality Indicators
- iv. Customer Satisfaction assessments including resolution of complaints
- v. Recommendations for Improvement

(Refer to Management Reviews SOP (NSTS-S8))

2.4.3 Customer Satisfaction Surveys and Resolution of Complaints

As a means for Continuous Improvement, the NSTS will conduct regular Customer Satisfaction Surveys to get feedback on the services that they are providing to the serviced sites. Any

complaints that are raised from these surveys or during the course of routine operations will be documented and the possible root cause of the complaints investigated in order to come up with possible solutions to resolve the complaint. Documentation of these complaints will form part of continuous learning that will aid to avoid future emergence of similar complaints as well as for reference to solving any similar issues in future. (***Refer to Customer Satisfaction Survey Forms (NSTS-F23)***). Customers have the right to raise complaints any time and these can be investigated in-order to come up with possible solutions. (***Refer to Customer Complaints Form (NSTS-F22)***)

3. SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Safety Policy and Procedures

- i. The SHLS Management and NSTS commits itself to always strive to prevent work related injuries, ill health, risks, accidents by providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all staff through providing information, training and supervision necessary according to the SHLS Safety Policy and Standards. (***Refer to Job Aid for decontamination and handling of sample spillages***)
- ii. The NSTS is committed to comply with all relevant applicable local and international laws and regulations governing health and safety with regards to transport of Bio-medical test samples and will apply reasonable standards of its own where laws and regulations do not exist.
- iii. The NSTS employees are committed to the continuous efforts to identify, minimize and eliminate recognized health and safety risks associated with the job. This also includes adhering to relevant Standard Operating Procedures.
- iv. It is the responsibility of the NSTS manager to ensure that all NSTS personnel are familiar with the SHLS safety policy and procedures as they pertain to sample transport.

3.2 NSTS Vehicle Safety Equipment

All NSTS vehicles are to be fitted with safety equipment below in order to comply with road safety standards;

1. Fire extinguishers
2. Motorist First aid Kit, with gloves and face mask (N95)

3. Spill kit
4. Reflective vest
5. Tyre repair kit
6. Breakdown triangle
7. Spare wheel
8. Biohazard signage on all side panels of the vehicle

4. VEHICLES USE AND AUTHORISATION

4.1 Budget Allocation to support

It is the responsibility of the SHLS management to request and manage the budget allocated to support the NSTS in its operations. The NSTS manager will regularly communicate any required monetary support to the Chief Lab Technologist and SHLS Administrator.

4.2 Vehicle Management Policy and Procedures

- i. NSTS vehicles are registered and monitored as Swaziland Government vehicles according to the Stores Regulations Part 2 (***Vehicle and Mechanical Plant Regulations***).
- ii. It is compulsory for all NSTS vehicle drivers to adhere to the Government Vehicle and Mechanical Plant Regulations. Failure to comply will result in the driver being fined according to the Road Traffic Act of 2007 and The Road Transportation Act of 2007.
- iii. The NSTS vehicles have a lockable load body with a capacity to hold 4 large cooler boxes (48L) and a shelf for documentation or holding non-biological specimen (e.g. EID samples). The vehicle load body is also fitted with a cooling system and a thermometer that shall be used to monitor the temperature of the vehicle load body; this is to make sure that samples are stored at the appropriate temperatures. (***Refer to Mother-lab Sample Storage SOP***) Vehicle fuel coupons are to be requested from the Ministry of Health Transport Office and signed for. Used fuel coupons are to be returned to the Ministry of Health Transport Officer.

4.3 Use of NSTS Vehicles (Do's and Don'ts)

- i. The vehicle load body shall be used for **ONLY** storing/transporting laboratory specimen and laboratory supplies and commodities.
- ii. The vehicle load body shall also be kept clean at all times.

- iii. The NSTS vehicles shall **NOT** be used for the transportation of food or food commodities.
- iv. The NSTS vehicles shall **NOT** be used for sharps or waste disposal
- v. The NSTS vehicles shall **NOT** be used to transport medical drugs
- vi. The NSTS vehicles shall **NOT** be used for drivers' personal gain, therefore all trips/journeys should be authorised by a valid/recognised authorising officer as highlighted in the Vehicle and Mechanical Plant Regulations.
- vii. All drivers **must** have a valid driver's licence on every trip.
- viii. All drivers **must** adhere to the traffic laws of the Kingdom of Swaziland.
- ix. All NSTS personnel shall respect and maintain patient confidentiality.

4.4 Vehicle Service and Maintenance

All NSTS Vehicles will be serviced and maintained according to the "Stores Regulations Part II, as stated in Chapter IX (page 12). As a general guide, the following apply:

- i. All NSTS vehicles are to be repaired at Government Central Transport Administration (CTA) workshops.
- ii. Prior to having taken the vehicle there, the officer driving the vehicle is to request for a memorandum for repairs from the NSTS Manager or designated authorised transport officer that shall allow him/her to take the vehicle in for repairs.
- iii. The NSTS phlebotomist shall make a request for vehicle maintenance and the NSTS Manager shall issue a CTA Memo for maintenance. The NSTS manager shall make sure that he has recorded in the vehicle maintenance log sheet, to keep a record of when the vehicle was sent for maintenance and what was the outcome. (***See Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs Requisition Service Log (NSTS-F4)***)
- iv. Vehicles are to be cleaned and the load body disinfected once a week (preferably every Friday) according to the Health and safety disinfection procedures. A cleaning log book shall be signed and kept in the vehicle.
- v. There must be a proper handover of vehicles between drivers and it is the responsibility of the officer receiving the vehicle to make sure that the process is documented as evidence that the condition and equipment for the vehicle are well received. This is to be also documented in the Vehicle Authorisation Log.

- vi. Vehicles should be inspected on a daily basis before every trip and any abnormalities documented and reported immediately. Documentation of starting mileage and ending mileage forms part of the daily inspections.

4.5 Accident Reporting

Accident reporting will be done immediately and documented as soon as possible. Accidents to Government Vehicles will be reported as per the “Stores Regulations Part II: Vehicle and Mechanical Plant Regulations” issued in terms of section 26 of the Finance and Audit Law of 1967 (Page 8).

5. SAMPLE TRANSPORT PROCESS

The supported medical laboratories have processes for each sample processing phase to ensure accurate and reliable testing. The different sample processing phases are: pre-analytical, analytical and post-analytical phases. With regards to these phases, the NSTS is part of the pre-analytical phase; transporting samples from different facilities to designated laboratories for testing according to a standardised sample transport schedule.

5.1 Sample Tracking Documentation

- i. Every specimen that is to be transported to the laboratory for testing is recorded in the ***Health Facility Specimen Logbook***
- ii. The test result of that specimen is also recorded into the logbook as soon as the result is received by the designated facility results custodian (this includes Phlebotomists in Mini-Labs and Lab Techs in referring Labs).
- iii. The NSTS Phlebotomist shall be responsible for completing the ***Specimen Delivery Checklist Form (NSTS F-22)*** when assessing the quality and acceptability of each specimen before packaging.
- iv. The responsible personnel from the facility referring its specimens shall sign the ***Specimen Delivery Checklist Logbook*** and the NSTS driver will also sign as proof of having received the specimens.
- v. All information from the ***Specimen Delivery Checklist*** and Health Facility Specimen Logbook information shall be entered into the NSTS Electronic Database.

5.2 Maintaining Specimen Quality and Integrity

The NSTS aims to maintain specimen quality and integrity for specimens that are being transported to laboratories for testing. Measures that have been implemented include;

- i. Rejection at facility level following an approved sample rejection criteria, and mentoring health facility representatives on specimen collection in order to reduce specimen rejections. (***Refer to Specimen Rejection or Acceptance SOP (NSTS-S15)***)
- ii. Sample storage temperature monitoring, to make sure samples are stored in the required temperature. (***Refer to Sample Handling, Packaging and Transport SOP (NSTS-S16)***)
- iii. Specimen Packaging using triple packaging to maintain both safety and specimen integrity. (***Refer Triple Packaging, Blood and Sputum SOP (NSTS-S17)***)

5.3 Transport Planning Process

The efficient transport of biological specimens requires good coordination between the sender (***health facility***), the courier (***NSTS***) and the receiver (***testing laboratory***), to ensure that the sample is transported safely and arrives on time and in good condition. Such coordination depends upon well-established communication and a partner relationship between the three parties. All have specific responsibilities to carry out in the sample transportation effort.

The Sender (Doctor, Nurse or Phlebotomist)

1. Notifies the carrier that there are samples to be transported
2. Prepares all required sample documentation (Lab request forms and Sample Transmission (ST) form)

The Carrier (NSTS Phlebotomist)

1. Provides the sender with the necessary shipping documents and instructions for their completion
2. Provides advice to the sender about correct packaging;
3. Maintains and archives the documentation for shipment and transport;
4. Monitors required holding conditions of the shipment while in transit;
5. Notifies the sender of any anticipated (or actual) delays in transit.

The Receiver (Laboratory representative)

1. Immediately checks all specimen against the Sample Transmission form
2. Acknowledges receipt of the specimen(s) by signing the ST form as well as on the ***NSTS Specimen Delivery Checklist Logbook***.

5.4 Specimen Packaging

- i. Following all laboratory safety precautions, samples are packaged and transported in the transport canisters according to the international transport guidelines.
- ii. Blood and sputum samples are packaged using the triple packaging system.
- iii. The triple Packaging system consists of 3 layers: first layer or primary receptacle, secondary layer or secondary receptacle and the third layer or outer receptacle.

(Refer to SOP for Sample Handling, Packaging and Transport (NSTS-S16))

The Triple Packaging system is as follows:

1. The primary receptacle (first layer) is used for storing the actual patient sample (Blood tube/Sputum). The primary receptacle has to be watertight and leak-proof.
2. The primary receptacle is then placed into the secondary receptacle. The secondary receptacle should be watertight and leak-proof as well; the secondary receptacle should also have enough absorbent material to absorb all fluid in case the primary receptacles, breaks or leaks.
3. The secondary layer that is holding the primary layer is then placed into the outer packaging/third layer. The outer packaging protects the contents of the secondary receptacle and primary receptacle from outside influences, such as physical damage, while in transit.
4. The third layer should contain Ice packs to sustain the relevant temperatures recommended and no ice packs for samples that need to be stored at room temperature. It is therefore necessary to pack samples according to specimens requiring ICE and NONE ICE.

(Refer to SOP for Triple Packaging, Blood and Sputum (NSTS-S17)).

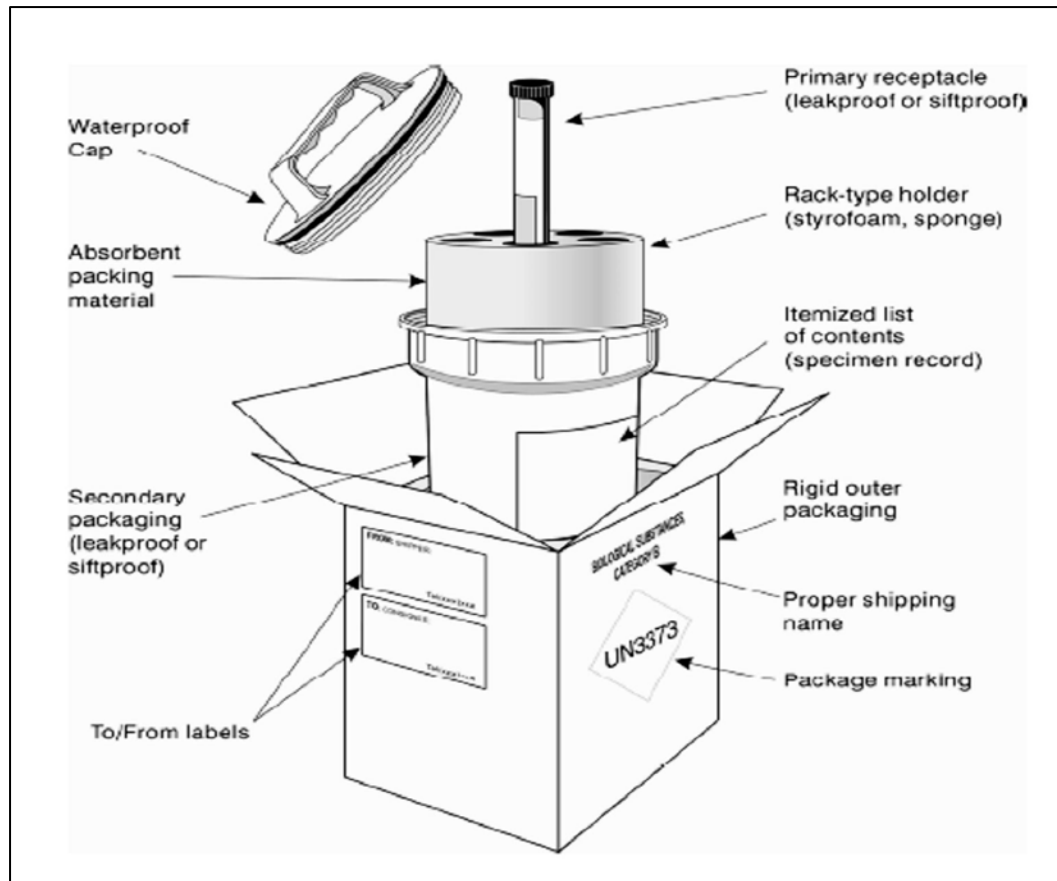


Fig 2: Triple Packaging for Sample Transportation

5.5. Returning of Results

When results have been authorised and issued, the NSTS Phlebotomists are responsible for transporting results in confidentiality to each of the facilities. Results shall be transported to each facility the same day as samples are being collected from the respective sites.

6. NSTS ASSESSMENTS

The NSTS strives to continuously improve the quality of service, the effectiveness and reliability. The NSTS does its best to identify and resolve any nonconformity that may affect laboratory performance and patient outcome. Therefore in order to provide quality services the NSTS is required to do regular assessments such as the following;

- i. monitoring and evaluation of customer feedback through customer satisfaction surveys done twice a year
- ii. Staff suggestions and impact of potential failures of NSTS and customer expectations. All staff is encouraged to offer suggestions for improvement of any aspect of the NSTS.

These suggestions are recorded, evaluated and implemented if useful. Feedback on the suggestions implemented is provided to the staff.

- iii. Internal NSTS assessment and monitoring of determined NSTS indicators

6.1 Internal NSTS Assessment

- a. During internal audits, information is gathered about:
 - i. Processes and operating procedures of the NSTS
 - ii. Staff competence and training
 - iii. Vehicles performance and vehicle tracking data
 - iv. Handling of samples i.e. sample rejections encountered and causes
 - v. Recording and reporting practices.
- b. Any non-conformance or departure from procedures will be documented and corrective action taken and documented as well.

6.2 Customer Focus

- a. The NSTS is dedicated to providing quality and timely service to all customers, both internal and external.
- b. The SHLS management commits to providing adequate resources to meet customer requirements and to provide an on-going program for continual improvement.
- c. Customer surveys will be implemented with the objective of assessing the satisfaction of the main customers i.e. clinicians and patients. **(See Customer Survey Form (NSTS-F14))**.
- d. The gaps noted from analysis of survey findings will help guide implementation of corrective actions where needed.
- e. Complaints will be documented and addressed accordingly with the aim of ensuring continuous improvement. **(See Customer Complaint Form (NSTS-F16))**

7. NSTS PERSONNEL

7.1 Recruitment

Recruitment of NSTS officers is done by the MOH through the National Laboratory Administrator or SHLS Management in line with the MOH and SHLS procedures. The NSTS Manager submits

requirements for the position that describes the appropriate education, training, experience, and skills needed for the available position. Interviews are arranged by the National Laboratory Administrator or SHLS Management.

7.2 Personnel File

An individual administrative file is established for each staff member (temporary, permanent) that contains documents concerning the staff qualifications (diplomas, CV, training certificate, etc.), the orientation record, competency assessments, training records, continuing education, job descriptions, and other certificates and documents are stored in the SHLS Management office, NSTS Office and at each regional laboratory where the NSTS is stationed and should be located in a controlled access area and updated regularly by the facility quality officer. Each new staff member or trainee requires a medical check-up within 30 days of starting work. The capacity/competence certificate for the given activities is stored in the staff's individual file along with the list of applicable vaccinations.

7.3 Staff Orientation

Safety orientation occurs before an employee is assigned to duties thereafter a staff orientation of all new employees is to be completed within 30 days of hire. All newly hired employees are trained/made aware of all policies and procedures in the department that apply to their job description and assignments. The National Laboratory Administrator is responsible for the administrative part of the orientation and the NSTS Manager is responsible for the department orientation. (***Refer to Orientation Checklist (NSTS-F11)***).

7.4 Training

The laboratory provides training for all personnel, which includes the laboratory rules and regulations, specimen collection, specimen storage, specimen transportation, the laboratory information system, health and safety, ethics and confidentiality. Each NSTS Phlebotomist is required to be attached for practical phlebotomy at the Mbabane Central Laboratory for a minimum of 2 weeks with the assistance of a qualified phlebotomist. The effectiveness of the training program is periodically reviewed. Future trainings are to be identified by the NSTS Manager; thereafter a formal request is sent to SHLS management to source funding and

approval. Continuous education is open for all employees following the Swaziland government rules and regulations for civil servants. ***(Refer to Internal Training SOP (NSTS-S7))***

7.5 Staff Competence and Appraisal

Competency of each new employee is assessed and verified before he/she is permitted to perform phlebotomy. There shall be a complete report of all trainings and practical's done. All employees are assessed for competency on an annual basis through a questionnaire that is completed by the immediate supervisor and annual appraisal that is done with the immediate supervisor. ***(See Employee Performance Appraisal SOP (NSTS-S04))***

8. DOCUMENT AND RECORD CONTROL

- a) All documents are uniquely identified.
- b) Date of approval, revision, version, total number of pages and authorizing signatories are included in the document.
- c) Documents are signed as a paper copy or authorized electronically.
- d) A document control log is maintained by the NSTS Manager, identifying the current valid versions and their distribution.
- e) A secure master file is maintained of all documents to prevent unauthorized access, loss or damage.
- f) Personnel are not permitted to make temporary amendments to documentation without the prior consent of the NSTS Manager.

8.1 Document and Records Archiving

- i. It is the responsibility of the NSTS Manager to archive documents and make sure that they are stored in the NSTS Documents file within the NSTS Office and are reviewed when needed.
- ii. Records are taken and entered into the NSTS Database and thereafter hard copies are filed for a period of one year after which they are disposed-off or are destroyed in the incinerator.

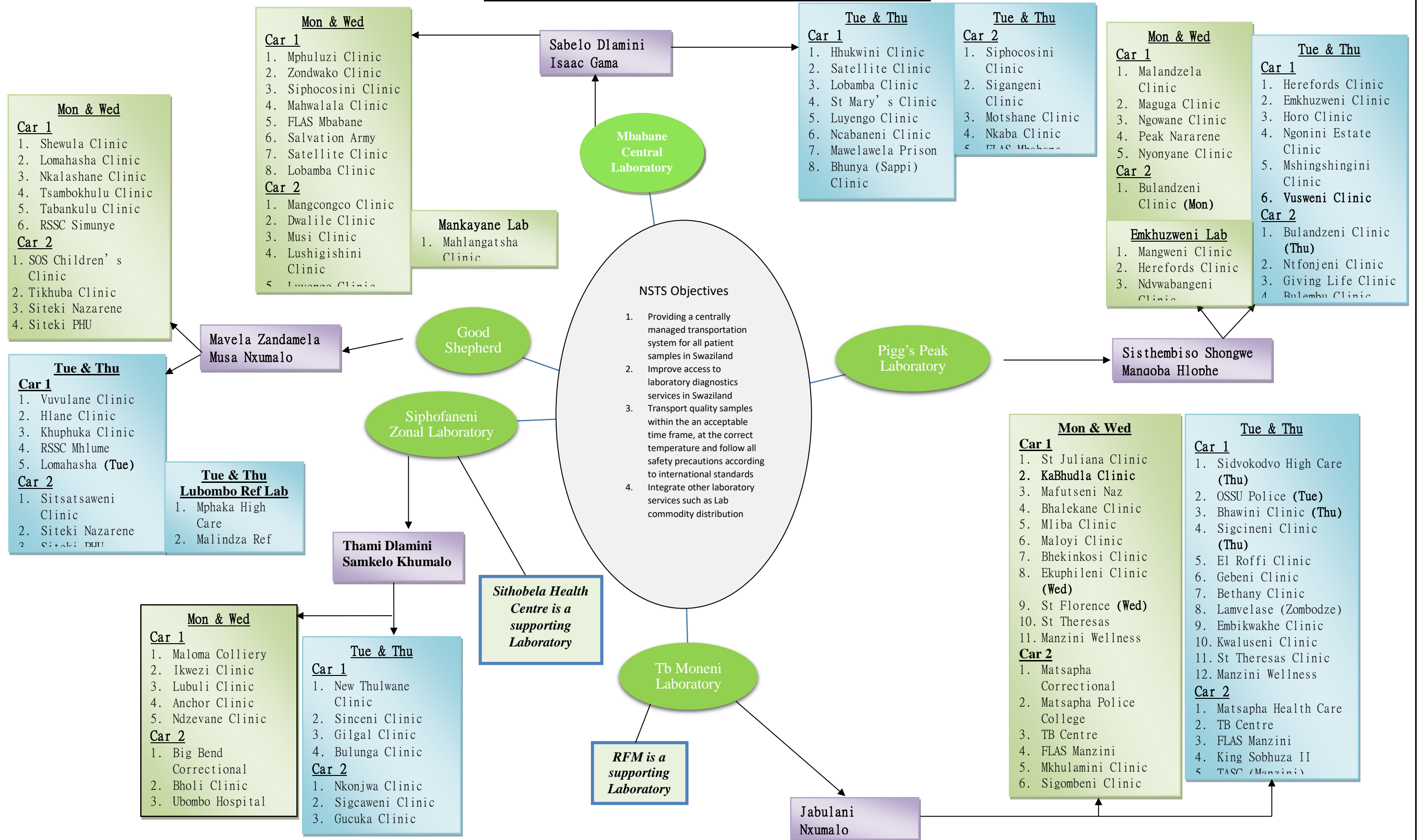
8. NSTS Information Management

- i. The NSTS has access to the data and information needed to provide a service that meets the needs and requirements of internal and external customers.
- ii. The NSTS Database provides for the recording, storage, and retrieval of data, and has documented procedures in place to ensure the confidentiality of patient information and the security of the data during each step of the process.
- iii. The personnel (temporary, permanent, etc.), whatever the duration of their contract, will sign a confidentiality agreement.

Reference Documents

1. Swaziland Stores Regulations Part 2 (Vehicle and Mechanical Plant Regulations). Section 26 of the Finance and Audit Law 1967
2. Swaziland Road Traffic Act, 2007 and The Road Transportation Act, 2007
3. SHLS Health and Safety Policy

National Sample Transportation Logistics



Vehicles depart the Laboratory between 10:00am and 11:00am and return between 14:00pm and 14:30 (All samples should be at the Laboratory by 14:00pm). Contacts: 7618-6855 or 2404-2190 ext 2117

UPDATED: 06 June 2016