



Memorandum

TO: URS Data Managers
FROM: Darla Metcalfe
DATE: April 6, 2005
SUBJECT: Reporting of Laboratory Services in ARIES

In the DSHS HIV Services Taxonomy, CD4 T-Cell Count, Viral Load Test and Laboratory-Service are all secondary services under Ambulatory/Outpatient Medical Care (AOMC). Having a separate subcategory for each of these laboratory services allows information to be collected about the use and cost of these services throughout Texas and is a result of a number of inquiries about the varying cost of lab services statewide. Since each of these laboratory services are a subcategory of their own, their costs should not be bundled into the cost of the Ambulatory/Outpatient Medical Care visit. In other words, always report these laboratory units and costs, whether they are conducted as part of a medical service visit or not. For some of you, this might be a change from how you have reporting these services in the past; therefore, here are some examples of how labs and AOMC visits should be handled.

If a client comes in and has lab work (e.g. CD4 and CBC) run as part of an AOMC visit, you would report:

- The Ambulatory/Outpatient Medical visit
Primary service – AOMC
Secondary service – AOMC
Enter one unit of service and its cost (not including labs) in the Units of Service section;
Save + Another;
- The CD4 count that was run during this visit
Primary Service – AOMC
Secondary service – CD4 T-cell Count
Enter one unit of service and its cost in the Units of Service section; Save + Another;
- The CBC test that was run during this visit
Primary service – AOMC
Secondary service – Laboratory – Service
Enter one unit of service and its cost in the Units of Service section; Save + Done.

If a client comes in for lab services only (separate from an AOMC visit) and has a Viral Load, PPD skin test and CBC run, you would report:

- The Viral Load test
Primary Service – AOMC
Secondary service – Viral Load Test
Enter one unit of service and its cost in the Units of Service section; Save + Another;
- The PPD skin test
Primary service – AOMC
Secondary service – Laboratory – Service
Enter one unit of service and its cost in the Units of Service section; Save + Another;
- The CBC test

Primary service – AOMC

Secondary service – Laboratory – Service

Enter one unit of service and its cost in the Units of Service section; Save + Done.

Additionally, we would like to clarify how to report lab panels in ARIES. A lab panel is a number of lab tests that are run (and billed) in a single kit. Common lab panels for HIV patients are CBC, lipid profile and chemistry profile (chem-12, etc.). Each of these panels will provide the clinician with a number of results but is run as a single test at the lab and is billed as a single unit. For example, a CBC will provide a clinician with information about the client's hemoglobin, platelet count, red and white blood cell count, and a number of other items, but is ordered as a single test, is run as a single test at the lab, and is billed as one unit. Because panels are one test kit at the lab and are billed as one unit, lab panels should be reported as a single lab test/unit under Laboratory-Service and the cost of that panel recorded.

It is important to recognize that a lab panel is not the same thing as a standing battery of test that your providers order. For example, some clinics order an 'HIV profile' for their clients that consist of a CBC, a CD4 count, a viral load, a chemistry profile and possibly a lipid profile. Even though this combination of tests might be referred to as a panel, they are not a panel, but rather a standing order or local shorthand for a battery of tests. Please speak with your clinicians or review your laboratory bill to understand how individual labs and lab panels are ordered and billed in your area.

All laboratory services and ambulatory care visits should be reported in the manner discussed above. If you have any questions regarding ARIES, please contact Darla Metcalfe at 512-490-2500, ext. 2678 or by email at darla.metcalfe@dshs.state.tx.us.