

# Standard Operating Procedure CCTU/SOP016

## Transport of Biological Samples

### 1. Scope

This standard operating procedure is for use by research staff working on clinical trials transporting biological samples.

### 2. Purpose

To ensure that samples are correctly packaged for transport to external sources in accordance with government legislation. The International Air Transport Association Packing Instruction 650.

### 3. Definitions and Abbreviations

The headings below contain the definitions of terms and meaning of abbreviations used within the document.

Common abbreviations and definitions can be found in CCTU/INF001 Common Abbreviations and Definitions.

#### 3.1. Definitions

Term	Definition
Trust-Sponsored	Sponsored by Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CUH) or sponsored by CUH jointly with The University of Cambridge
UN3373	Samples of materials such as blood, tissue, excreta, secreta etc collected from humans or animals are considered, as a minimum, Category B infectious substances. For example, samples from otherwise healthy individuals or where there is no reason to suspect that they are suffering from a severe infectious disease. However, if there is evidence to suggest otherwise, eg on the basis of known medical history, local endemic conditions or professional judgement concerning the circumstances of the source material, then such material should be assigned to Category A, and Category A specific packaging and transport requirements apply
Sample	Samples of materials such as blood, tissue, excreta, secreta etc in appropriate labelled container
Wadding	Absorbent material
Traceability paperwork	e.g. laboratory storage/processing log

## 3.2. Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
SLA	Service Level Agreement
QMS	Quality Management System

## 4. Undertaken by

Clinical trials staff where specific instructions for the transport of biological samples have not been provided in the protocol.

## 5. Items Required

Labels

Wadding, tape

Approved primary container/receptacle for samples (sourced commercially))

Outer package e.g. box, jiffy bag

Dry ice or cool packs if required

Transport documentation

Labeled Sample

## 6. Summary of Significant Changes

New

## 7. Method

The following sections provide a description of the processes to be followed when implementing this document's procedures.

**Biological samples from clinical trials are classified as UN3373**

### 7.1. Packing Instructions

- Samples must be labeled according to protocol, or if not specified in protocol with patient trial number, participating site identifier (if applicable), date of collection as a minimum
- Patients anonymity must be maintained (i.e. no hospital stickers, no name of patient, no patient address or patient hospital number)
- The primary container(s)/receptacle must be leak proof and robust
- Absorbent material is placed between the sample primary container(s)/receptacles(s)
- Multiple samples should be individually wrapped before being packed
- There must be sufficient absorbent material to absorb the entire contents of the samples within the primary container(s)/receptacle(s) to ensure that

any release of liquid substance will not compromise the integrity of the outer packaging

- The outer packaging should be of a type tested and approved by the Department of Transport and marked accordingly. An itemised list of contents must be enclosed in the package.
- A copy of the consent form should be supplied if requested.
- Traceability paperwork must be completed for a complete audit trail.
- Transport documentation must be filled in.

### 7.2. Frozen Samples

- Dry ice is placed in the outer packaging normally a polystyrene box.
- The primary receptacle is covered in the dry ice.
- Dry Ice will sublimate and release carbon dioxide gas.
- Do not tape down the lid (prevents build up of gas) of polystyrene box.
- Place the polystyrene box inside a cardboard box.
- Secure box in such a way that there can be release of carbon dioxide gas. This prevents a build up of pressure that could rupture the packaging.
- Instructions for filling and closing such packages are normally provided by the packaging manufacturer.

### 7.3. Samples Transported at Ambient Temperature

- A fridge pack or gel pack may be packed between the sample and the absorbent material, or if specified according to protocol.
- Sample absorbent material and gel pack are placed inside a leak proof primary receptacle.
- Pack in a suitable outer container, sturdy cardboard, jiffy bag, polystyrene box.

### 7.4. Labelling all Packages

- All packages must be marked with a square each side being 50mm or 2 inches set at 45°. Within the square is UN3373. Written next to the symbol in letters at least 6mm high is "Biological Substance Category B".
- Address should be clear.
- The name of the sender should be accessible.



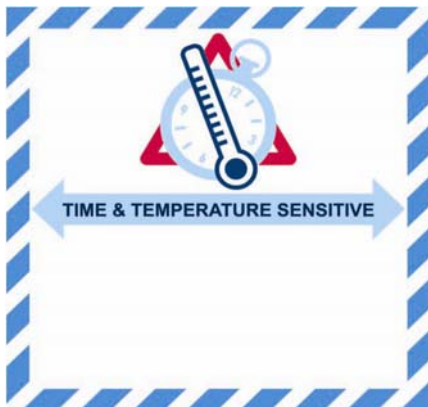
**BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCES  
CATEGORY B**

### 7.5. Labelling Packages containing Dry Ice

- Packages containing dry ice must also have the following **additional** label filled in by the sender



### 7.6. Packages that are Time and Temperature Sensitive



- Only to be used when there is a specific agreement in place with the stakeholders (shipper, forwarder, carrier, etc)
- Only to be completed as indicated in that agreement (i.e. in the SLA, QMS, SOP, etc)
- The temperature indicated on the label is the only one that will be followed during transport (other package markings will be disregarded)
- Informs on the external handling temperatures
- The label will be a 3 colour label with gradients for the effect of the different blues

## 8. Monitoring Compliance with and the Effectiveness of this Document

### a. Process for Monitoring compliance and Effectiveness

As part of routine monitoring visits, audit and inspection

### b. Standards/Key Performance Indicators

This process forms part of a quality management system. Documents are reviewed every two years

## 9. References

The Institute of Clinical Research, 2008, Abbreviations used in Clinical Trials.  
International Air Transport Association. Packing Instruction 650.

## 10. Associated Documents

Listed in section5

## 11. Equality and Diversity Statement

This document complies with the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust service equality and diversity statement.

## 12. Disclaimer

It is the user's responsibility to check against the electronic library that this printed out copy is the most recent issue of this document.

Review date	2 years (or earlier in light of new evidence) from approval date
Owning department:	CCTU QA
Supersedes:	New
Local reference:	CCTU/SOP016 version1