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Laboratory Specimen Collection Management System

Abstract

A laboratory specimen collection management system includes a number of specimen collection stations coupled to a set of specimen processing system. Each specimen collection station is made up of a user interface device, a bar-code scanner or data input device, a processing unit, and a printer. It is located at the point of care where a user uses it to collect test specimens from a patient. A user can be a phlebotomist, nurse or doctor (clinicians). Each specimen processing system has a processing unit that is coupled to a database containing among other things, the unique laboratory analyzer test accession number for a specimen. Upon verification of a given patient, the specimen processing system determines, based on a proprietary set of logic, the type, number and color code of the tubes to use to collect the specimen from the patient. The information together with the laboratory analyzer test accession number is passed on to the specimen collection station. A user can print the required labels *in situ*. Each printed label contains the patient identification code, patient name, the unique laboratory analyzer test accession number for a specimen, date and time of print, location, test codes and color of tube. All activity with the collection of the specimen is recorded in the database, making it auditable. The automated management of the specimen collection process at the point of care ensures the removal of errors due to wrong patient identification, tube labeling, tube type usage, and amount of specimen collected.

FIG 1

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