

**Overview:****Goal 2: Improve the effectiveness of communication among caregivers**

NPSG.02.03.01: Report critical results of test and diagnostic procedures on a timely basis.

**Why this goal is important to safe practice**

Critical results of tests and diagnostic procedures are results that fall outside the normal range and may indicate a life-threatening situation. It is important that the responsible licensed caregiver receive these results within an established time frame so that the patient can be promptly treated.

**Elements of Performance**

1. Develop written procedures for managing the critical results of tests and diagnostic procedures that address the following:
  - o The definition of critical results of tests and diagnostic procedures
  - o By whom and to whom critical results of tests and diagnostic procedures are reported
  - o The acceptable length of time between the availability and reporting of critical results of tests and diagnostic procedures
2. Implement the procedures for managing critical results of tests and diagnostic procedures.
3. Evaluate the timeliness of reporting the critical results of tests and diagnostic procedures.

**Selected MGH Policies and Procedures Related to this Goal (in Trove):**

Clinical Policy and Procedure Manual

- Critical Tests and Critical Values  
<http://library.partners.org/MGH1/trove.asp?FI=Clinical+Policy+%26+Procedure+Manual&DI=Critical+Tests+and+Critical+Values&HU=EmptyURL>