



STURDY
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

New Testing Technologies At Sturdy Memorial Hospital Enhance Patient Safety And Care

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Medical laboratory testing is an essential part of health maintenance and disease management, and ensuring positive patient identification and high quality testing are important parts of overall patient safety. The Laboratory at Sturdy Memorial Hospital continually evaluates new methods, tests, and instrumentation to ensure the most reliable, up-to-date testing and diagnostic services are available. According to Richard Smith, MD, PhD, Chief of Pathology, "Laboratory and Pathology services at Sturdy support the Hospital's mission of providing patients with the highest quality of care. The departments are constantly growing and evolving with new techniques and technologies to improve testing efficiency, quality, and safety, and this year, have introduced two new technologies that enhance our testing capabilities and, ultimately, our patient care."

The Laboratory recently adopted the Lattice® MediCopia Specimen Collection System. This system incorporates seven different technologies within one handheld computing device to provide staff with real-time specimen orders, phlebotomy, distribution, and review; patient demographics and positive patient identification accomplished by scanning barcodes on patient wristbands; and specimen labels printed at the bedside after the blood specimen is obtained. "The application improves patient care and safety by eliminating the possibility of incorrect specimen identification and labeling errors as well as by streamlining order fulfillment and record keeping," says Dr. Smith.

Earlier this year, the Laboratory also introduced the Gen-Probe® Aptima test to screen for chlamydia and gonorrhea directly from the Pap smear vial or voided urine. This molecular diagnostics test offers multiplex detection and differentiation of the two diseases from a single sample. By simplifying collection procedures, doctors can easily fulfill current practice guidelines for comprehensive screening for these two asymptomatic STD's in patient populations. According to Charles Kennedy, Director of the Laboratory, "DNA replication and molecular diagnostics is one the fastest growing technologies in the clinical laboratory, and tests like the Aptima test detect disease-causing agents directly, by means of their unique genetic fingerprints, to provide faster, more accurate results than traditional methods such as antibody and culture testing. We're pleased to offer this level of testing capability to our providers and patients in the community."

The Laboratory at Sturdy Memorial Hospital is accredited by the College of American Pathologists and the American Association of Blood Banks. Testing capabilities include pathology, blood chemistry, hematology, microbiology, transfusion medicine, and cytology. For more information on Sturdy Memorial Hospital's Laboratory services, call 508-236-7800.

Sturdy Memorial Hospital is a full-service, independent, financially stable, not-for-profit acute care community hospital in Attleboro, Massachusetts.