

Paul Jones

fyi-request-20835-f5932667@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Paul,

Your Official Information Act request, reference H2022014520:

Thank you for your email of 12 October 2022 requesting information regarding documentation relating to newborn babies. As part of the health and disability system reforms, as of 1 July 2022 the functions previously under the Manatū Hauora National Screening Unit have transferred to Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand (Te Whatu Ora).

As the matters you have raised now fall under the functions of Te Whatu Ora, our agency will respond to your request which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). You requested the following:

“provide documentation on the systems and processes related to handling of a newly born child.

We are particularly interested in the details surrounding the taking of blood and ink print of the sole of the child's feet. In addition, please also provide samples of the forms used during these procedures and where they are sent too for processing.”

Guidance related to the care of the mother and newborn in the first few hours after the birth can be found at: [Observation of Mother and Baby in the Immediate Postnatal Period: Consensus statements guiding practice | Ministry of Health NZ](#). However, the newborn metabolic blood spot screen is not taken until at least 24 hours after the baby has been born so this is not captured in the guidance.

The National Screening Unit (NSU) at Te Whatu Ora has provided information on the systems and processes related to taking the newborn metabolic blood spot sample from the baby's feet for the purposes of Newborn Metabolic Screening Programme (NMSP). The NSU has also provided the forms / blood spot cards and where they are sent for processing. The NSU provides guidance for all practitioners involved in aspects of the NMSP including for; Lead Maternity Carers (LMC's), hospital midwives, nurses and phlebotomists. The guidance available includes:

- Guidelines for practitioners providing services within the NMSP in New Zealand. Please note that these guidelines are currently being reviewed and are publicly available at: www.nsu.govt.nz/health-professionals/newborn-metabolic-screening-programme/procedures-guidelines-and-reports.
- Two e-learning modules for Newborn Metabolic Screening Programme:
 1. *Newborn Metabolic Screening Programme.*
 2. *Best Practice - Newborn Metabolic Blood Spot Collection.*

These are publicly available on Learn Online at:

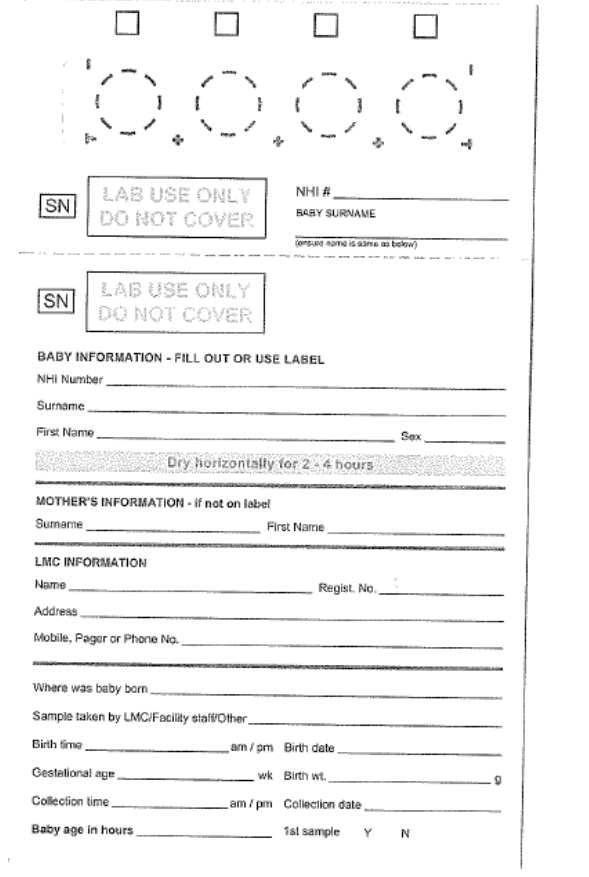
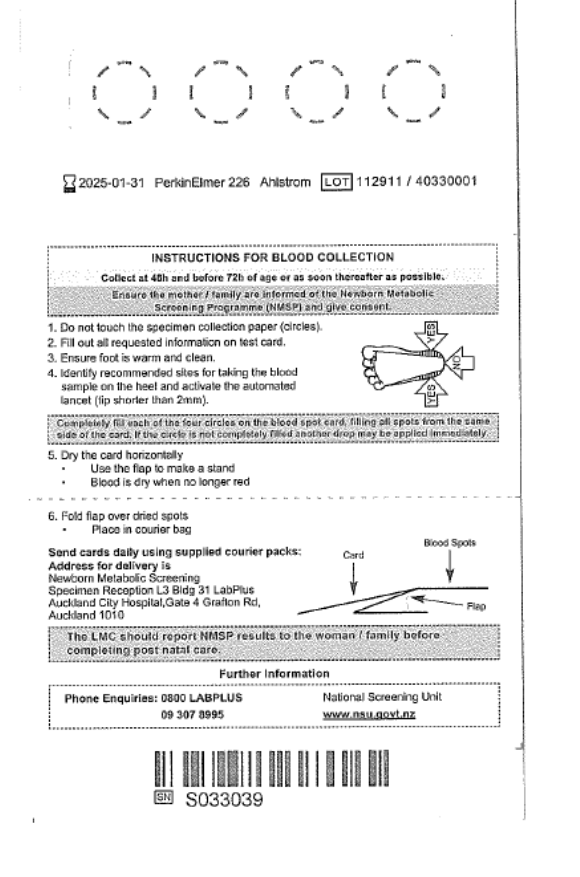
<https://learnonline.health.nz/admin/tool/sitepolicy/userpolicy.php>. You will need to log onto Learn Online to view and complete the e-learning modules.

- The Newborn Metabolic Screening Programme Policy Framework which is publicly available at: www.nsu.govt.nz/health-professionals/newborn-metabolic-screening-programme/procedures-guidelines-and-reports/quality.

Additional information on the programme is available at: www.nsu.govt.nz/health-professionals/newborn-metabolic-screening-programme/procedures-guidelines-and-reports and www.nsu.govt.nz/pregnancy-newborn-screening/newborn-metabolic-screening-programme-heel-prick-test/about-newborn.

Hospital or birthing facilities may also have their own detailed practices and procedures for newborn metabolic blood spot collection that build on the guidance provided by the NSU.

Blood spot cards are sent to LabPLUS, Auckland City Hospital via courier. Prepaid and prelabelled courier envelopes are supplied to LMCs and hospital and birthing facilities by LabPLUS.

Front of blood spot collection card:	Back of Blood spot collection card:
 <p>LAB USE ONLY DO NOT COVER</p> <p>NIHI # _____ BABY SURNAME _____ <small>(ensure name is same as below)</small></p> <p>LAB USE ONLY DO NOT COVER</p> <p>BABY INFORMATION - FILL OUT OR USE LABEL NIHI Number _____ Surname _____ First Name _____ Sex _____</p> <p><i>Dry horizontally for 2 - 4 hours</i></p> <p>MOTHER'S INFORMATION - if not on label Surname _____ First Name _____</p> <p>LMC INFORMATION Name _____ Regist. No. _____ Address _____ Mobile, Pager or Phone No. _____</p> <p>Where was baby born _____ Sample taken by LMC/Facility staff/Other _____ Birth time _____ am / pm Birth date _____ Gestational age _____ wk Birth wt. _____ g Collection time _____ am / pm Collection date _____ Baby age in hours _____ 1st sample Y N</p>	 <p>2025-01-31 PerkinElmer 226 Ahlstrom LOT 112911 / 40330001</p> <p>INSTRUCTIONS FOR BLOOD COLLECTION Collect at 48h and before 72h of age or as soon thereafter as possible. Ensure the mother / family are informed of the Newborn Metabolic Screening Programme (NMSP) and give consent.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Do not touch the specimen collection paper (circles). Fill out all requested information on test card. Ensure foot is warm and clean. Identify recommended sites for taking the blood sample on the heel and activate the automated lancet (tip shorter than 2mm). <p>Completely fill each of the four circles on the blood spot card, filling all spots from the same side of the card. If the circle is not completely filled another drop may be applied immediately.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dry the card horizontally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the flap to make a stand Blood is dry when no longer red Fold flap over dried spots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place in courier bag <p>Send cards daily using supplied courier packs: Address for delivery is Newborn Metabolic Screening Specimen Reception L3 Bldg 31 LabPlus Auckland City Hospital, Gate 4 Grafton Rd, Auckland 1010</p> <p>The LMC should report NMSP results to the woman / family before completing post natal care.</p> <p>Further Information Phone Enquiries: 0800 LABPLUS 09 307 8995 National Screening Unit www.nsu.govt.nz</p> <p>SN S033039</p>
<p>Note: this picture is slightly different to the example in the Guidelines as the blood spot collection card has recently been updated.</p>	

Taking an ink print of the sole of a child's feet is not part of standard maternity care in New Zealand. Because of this we are unable to provide the information regarding details of ink print of the sole of the child's feet and the forms used during these procedures and where they are sent for processing. This part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act as the requested information is not held by Te Whatu Ora or Manatū Hauora, or any other agency subject to the Act.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. You are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Nāku iti noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Chapman'.

Stephanie Chapman
Kaiwhakahaere Roopu | Group Manager
National Screening Unit
National Public Health Service