



## Recommendations

### Labelling Forensic Samples

The medico-legal guidelines and recommendations published by the Faculty are for general information only. Appropriate specific advice should be sought from your medical defence organisation or professional association. The Faculty has one or more senior persons from each of the three medical defence organisations on its Board, but for the avoidance of doubt, endorsement of the medico-legal guidelines or recommendations published by the Faculty has not been sought from any of the medical defence organisations.

It is the responsibility of the person who obtains the sample to ensure it is appropriately labelled. A crisis worker, police officer or SOCO may assist with the labelling process but the healthcare professional must check the label. The swabs and bags vary from constabulary to constabulary and many do not have appropriate headings on the bags/labels.

#### Tamper evident bags

These should be labelled with the following information:

IDENTIFYING REF	DJR/6
FORCE/ORGANISATION	TVP
DIVISION/DEPT	
DESCRIPTION OF ITEM	VULVAL SWABS
FROM PLACE/PERSON	ANN BROWN
TAKEN BY	DR ROGERS
SEALING BY	F SIMS
DATE AND TIME	5/2/09
DATE AND TIME	5/2/09 0345
SIGNED	DR ROGERS
SIGNED	F SIMS
INCIDENT/CRIME N°	
LAB REF	
Property Handling Details:	

- item/exhibit number using the healthcare professional's initials, e.g. DJR/6;
- description of the samples e.g. vulval swabs;
- name of person from whom the sample is taken (donor). Use a reference number for self-referrals;
- the name and signature of the person who first handled the sample;
- the name and signature of the person who sealed the tamper-evident bag;
- BLOOD AND URINE MUST HAVE the time at which sample was taken;
- date on which the sample was taken.

#### Swabs, sheaths and bottles

These should be labelled with the following information:

Name of donor:	ANN BROWN
Sample description:	VULVAL SWAB A
Item number:	DJR/6
Date:	5/2/09
Time taken:	

- name of person from whom the sample is taken (donor). Use a reference number for self-referrals;
- description of the sample e.g. vulval swab A;
- item/exhibit number using the doctor's initials, e.g. DJR/6;
- BLOOD AND URINE MUST HAVE the time at which the sample was taken;
- date on which the sample was taken.

The identification/exhibit number and/or timings **must** reflect the order of sampling.

Where two swabs have been taken from the same site it is **imperative** that there is a clear indication on the swab label regarding the order in which the swabs were obtained. This is most easily done by describing the first of the two samples as sample A and the second as sample B.