



Ministry of Health

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Acronyms:

BA	Blood agar
CA	Chocolate agar
MAC	MacConkey
ATCC	American Type Culture Collection
H&S	Health and Safety
ID	Identification
QC	Quality Control
SOP	Standard operating procedure
MOH	Ministry of health

1. Purpose

This document describes the procedure for quality control of microbiological culture media.

2. Scope

This document is applicable for all medical laboratories under MOH and other collaborative governmental and non-governmental health institutions.

3. Definitions

3.1 . In house made media: media prepared within the laboratory.

3.2 . Differential tubed media: media used to differentiate different types of microorganism based on their colors and colony shapes.

3.3 Selective media: media used to select a growth of some organism by inhibition of others.

3.4 Enrichment media: media that provides extra nutrients in order to support the growth of organism present in low concentrations.

4. Procedure

4.1. Background:

Most of the laboratories under ministry of health receives readymade media. The initial and final identification of bacteria depends on biochemical reactions that are valid only after careful isolation techniques. The ability to isolate pathogenic bacteria from clinical specimens can only be as effective as the media used for culture. Media quality control has a great impact on patient safety by ensuring delivering of accurate culture result (not to miss significant growth) and confirming physical and chemical properties of the plates are within the standards. Local verification in each laboratory is essential for each received batch.

4.2. Principle:

4.2.1. Selective media should be tested with both organisms expected to grow and with organisms that should be inhibited.

4.2.2. Any new batch of media received, should be validated and documented before usage.

4.2.3. Re-Check the QC of media after 2 month of storage.

4.2.4. Reference ATCC strains should be used for testing the media.

4.2.5. There should be continuous comparison of suppliers.

4.3.Pre – analytical stage:

4.3.1. Process of receiving readymade media batches:

4.3.1.1.Upon receiving each batch of media, check and record the following:

- Correct quantity and type as requested.
- Expiry date of the batch of each type of media.
- The batch / Lot number.
- QC certificate.
- Receiving condition (clean boxes, integrity of shipment).

4.3.2. Material:

Reagents	Consumables/Supplies	Equipment
saline all media ATCC strains	Sterile Swab Calibrated pipette Tubes Tips	Densi-meter Vortex Safety cabinet class II Incubators

4.3.3. Safety precaution:

- All specimens need to be treated as potentially infectious. Standard procedures for handling of biohazard material must be followed at all times. Universal Precautions must be practiced at all stages of these procedures.

4.3.4. Quality control:

- Check the expiry dates of all media, ATCC strains, and reagents before use.
- All media, reagents, **MUST** be quality controlled before use.
- Record the quality control results in the appropriate media QC sheet.

4.4.Analytical stage:

4.4.1. Record the physical inspection of received plates: these include cracked media or petri dishes, hemolysis, thickness of agar, humidity, freezing, unequal filling, excessive bubbles, and contamination.

4.4.2. For in-house made media: check pH after media solidify.

4.4.3. The sterility of all media is checked for incubation at 35° C for 48 hrs.

- 4.4.4. Media is also checked for its overall appearance which is recorded in the quality control QC log sheet.
- 4.4.5. The quality of each lot of media is tested by inoculation of ATCC strains of organisms to examine the support/ inhibition of growth before being used for clinical purposes.
- 4.4.6. Part of media QC is examining its performance with the antibiotic and this part is done during checking the QC of antibiotic.
- 4.4.7. Use the following Tables included in the Appendices A, B, and C for specific media/organism combinations and expected results.
- 4.4.8. Inoculation methods include:
- Differential tubed media: inoculation of separate tubes with a known positive and negative control organism.
 - Selective media: inoculation of separate plates with an organism, which the media is selective for, and with organisms for which the media is inhibitory.
 - Enrichment media: inoculation of fastidious microorganisms whose growth should be supported on the medium.
- 4.4.9. Procedure for inoculation method:
- 4.4.9.1.Preparation of suspension
- 4.4.9.1.1. Use an 18-24 hour culture of the quality control organism
- 4.4.9.1.2. Prepare suspension in sterile non bacteriostatic saline (0.85% w/v NACL) to make 0.5 McFarland standards.
- 4.4.9.2.Dilution for non-selective media
- 4.4.9.2.1. Prepare 1:1000* dilution in non-bacteriostatic saline or (sterile broth) by adding 5 ul of 0.5 McFarland suspension of the desired QC strain to 4995 ul of non-bacteriostatic saline (0.85% w/v NACL).
- 4.4.9.2.2. Inoculate each plate with 10ul (0.01ml) of the suspension.
- 4.4.9.2.3. Streak for isolation.
- 4.4.9.2.4. 1:1000 dilution has been proven to give 10-100 CFU of QC organism tested
- 4.4.9.3.Dilution for selective media

- 4.4.9.3.1. Prepare 1:100 dilution in non-bacteriostatic saline or (sterile broth) by adding 10 ul of 0.5 McFarland suspension of the desired QC strain to 990 ul of non-bacteriostatic saline (0.85% w/v NACL) for 1 ml.
- 4.4.9.3.2. For 5 ml preparation, add 50 ul of 0.5 McFarland suspension of the desired QC strain to 4950 ul of non-bacteriostatic saline (0.85% w/v NACL).
- 4.4.9.3.3. Inoculate each plate with 10ul (0.01ml) of the suspension.
- 4.4.9.3.4. Streak for isolation.
- 4.4.9.3.5. For testing the inhibitory concentration of the selective media concentration ≥ 100 CFU of QC organism is required.
- 4.4.9.3.6. For N.gonorrhea use 1:10 dilution

4.4.9.4. Tubed media

- 4.4.9.4.1. Inoculate with 10uL (0.01mL) of undiluted 0.5 McFarland suspension.

4.5. Post – analytical stage:

4.5.1. Interpretation / Results / Alerts:

- 4.5.1.1. Nonselective media perform satisfactory if the quality control organisms exhibit adequate growth, expected colony size, typical morphology, and inhibition of growth of certain organisms.
- 4.5.1.2. Selective (growth) media perform satisfactory if the quality control organisms exhibit adequate growth, expected colony size, typical morphology, and inhibition of growth of certain organisms.
- 4.5.1.3. Growth of QC organism judged adequate if colony count is 10-100 CFU and within factor of 2 compare to previously approved batch of media.
For example, If the average number of colonies in the previously approved media is 40 then the average number of colonies in the plates from the new batch of medium. Refer to Growth Promotion Test SOP.
- 4.5.1.4. Record all the media QC results and interpretation on QC sheets.

4.5.2. Reporting: report as Pass or Fail QC.

4.5.3. In case of any QC failure, the media should not be used. Investigation of the reason should be conducted, recorded and raise the issue to the quality officer / manager to fill the quality form.

4.5.4. Limitation:

4.5.4.1. Guidelines for establishing expiration dating:

4.5.4.1.1. The performance and expiration dating of culture media are affected by numerous factors that may vary from lot to lot.

4.5.4.1.2. Factors adversely affecting the expiration dating and performance of prepared media include:

- overheating of basal ingredients
- Using improper storage temperature.
- Under filling medium container
- Exposing medium to light
- Alternating the storage temperature of sealed media from room temperature to 2° to 8° C
- Using small fill volume (less than 1.0ml) of tubed medium
- Using loosely capped tube media.
- Storing plates in open or improperly sealed bags.

5. Responsibilities

5.1.Responsible staff:

- To ensure the adherence to procedure
- To facilitate the communication with responsible parties in case of QC failure.

5.2.Quality manager /officer

- To follow up the implementation of the procedure
- To monitor regularly communication of critical results and raise non-conformance with corrective action once needed.

5.3.All lab staff:

- To adhere to the procedure.
- To document record and release results as recommended
- To report test failures or incident

6. Document History and Version Control

Version	Description	Review Date
1	Initial Release	May 2026

7. References

Title of book/ journal/ articles/ Website	Author	Year of publication	Page
Clinical Microbiology Procedure Handbook, American Society of Microbiology, Washington, DC,		2016	
CARIBBEAN REGIONAL MICROBIOLOGY STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES, Preparation and Quality Control – SOP No: CRM-SOP 18		2008	
CLSI M22 – A3 2004		2004	
Inoculation of quality control media SOP	Dr. Fatma Al Yaqoubi	2016	
Mount Sinai hospital, Quality Control Manual		2022	
https://resources.psmile.org/resources/process-control/section-specific-information/microbiology/bacteriology/Pro6.7-A-01%20Media%20QC.doc/view		2022	

8. Annexes: readymade media inspection:

8.1. Type of media (Name)..... Manufacturer

Expiry date Lot #.....

Checklist	Results	Satisfaction Satisfactory / Not
Physical inspection: Presence of precipitate, cracked media or petri dishes, hemolysis, thickness, humidity, freezing, unequal filling, excessive bubbles, and contamination, loosely capped tube media.		
Sterility check	No bacterial or fungal growth detected / Not	
Incubate the plates removed for examination during the visual inspection (see above) and incubate at 35C for ≤ 72 hours		
Quality assurance	Positive control strain : colony count : Negative control strain: colony count:	
Growth and biochemical reaction	Follow the inoculation and growth promotion test SOP Use the appropriate QC sheet for specific media	
Pass / Not PassReference: CLSI M22 – A3 2004		

8.2. Name of the media: **5% Horse Blood Agar** Expiry date _____ Month/Year _____

Incubation: Aerobic, 24-48h, 35°C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	pH	Qty.	No. Plates	Sterility Check	Quality Control Check						PASSE/FAIL	Signature
							<i>S.pyogenes</i> ATCC 19615		<i>S.pneumoniae</i> ATCC6305		<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923	<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922		
							Growth	Beta hemolys is	Growth	Alpha hemolysis	Growt h	Growt h		
Total	Quantity Made				No. Plates used				No. Batches					

Incubation: Aerobic, 24-48h, 35°C

8.3. Name of the media: Chocolate Agar Expiry date
Incubation: CO2, 24 and 48h, 35C

Month/Year

Preparation Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant Made	No plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check		PASS/FAIL	Signature
							N.gongrrheae ATCC 43069	<i>H.infleunzae</i> ATCC 10211		
							Growth	Growth		
Total	Quantity Made				No Plates used			No Batches		

8.4. Name of media: **MacConkey agar** Expiry date _____

Month/Year _____

Incubation: Aerobic, 18-24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Qty	No plates	Sterility check at 48 hrs	Quality Control Check				PASS/FAIL	Signature
							<i>P.mirabilis</i> ATCC 12453	<i>S.typhimurium</i> ATCC14028	<i>E.feacalis</i> ATCC 29212	<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922		
							Growth Partial inhibition of swarming	Growth Colorless colonies	Inhibition (partial)	Growth Pink col		
Total	Quantity Made				Batches			Plates used				

8.5. Name of media: **Cystine Lactose Electrolyte Deficient (CLED)** Expiry date

Month/Year

Incubation: Aerobic, 24-48h, 35

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant made	No plate	Sterility check	Quality Control Check			PASS/FAIL	Signature
							<i>P.vulgaris</i> ATCC 8427	<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923	<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922		
							1. Growth 2. spreading	3. Inhibition, partial growth 4. Deep yellow	5. Growth 6. Yellow		
							7.	8.	9.		
Total	Quantity Made						Plates used		Batches		

8.6. Name of media: **Campylobacter Agar** Expiry date

Month/Year

Incubation: microaerophilic condition, 43 degrees, 48hrs

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Qty	No plate	Sterility check	Quality Control Check		PASS/FAIL	Signature
							C.jejuni ATCC 33291	E.coli ATCC 25922		
							Growth	Inhibition		
Total	Quantity Made						Plates used	Batches		

8.7. Name of media: Buffered Charchol Yeast Extract (BCYE) Expiry Date
Incubation: reduced O2 with CO2, 48H, 42

Month/ Year

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Qty	No plate	Sterility check	Quality Control Check	PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Growth		
Total	Quantity Made						Plates used	Batches	

8.8. Name of media: **Brain Heart Infusion (BHI) broth** Expiry date..... Month/Year.....

Incubation: Aerobic, 48-72h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant made	No tubes	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922	<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923	PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Growth	Growth		
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.9. Name of Media: Normal Saline and Distilled Water
Incubation: **Aerobic, 18-24h, 35° C**

Expiry Date

Month/Year

[illegible]

8.10. Name of Media: Selenite Broth
 Incubation: Aerobic, 18-24 h, 35° C

Expiry Date

Month/Year.....

Prep. Date	Lot No.	Quantity made	No Vials	pH	Sterility	Quality Control Organisms		PASS/F AIL	Sign
						<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922	<i>S.typhimurium</i> ATCC 14024		
						No Growth	Growth		

8.11. Name of Media: Peptone water
Incubation: Aerobic, 18-24 h, 35-37° C

Expiry Date

Month/Year

[illegible]

8.12. Name of Media: Alkaline Peptone
Incubation: Aerobic, 18-24 h, 35° C

Expiry date

Month/Year

Prep. Date	Lot No.	Quantity	No Vials	pH 7.0-7.4	Sterility	Quality Control Organisms		PASS/F AIL	Sign
						<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922			
						Growth	Indole reaction		

8.13. Name of media: Bordetella Pertussis Agar

Expiry date

Month/Year

Incubation: CO2, 48-72h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							Well characterized clinical isolate Growth	<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923 <i>K. pneumoniae</i> ATCC 13883 Inhibition	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.14. Name of media: Sabouraud agar Expiry date

Month / Year

Incubation: CO2, 48-72h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							<i>C.albican</i> ATCC 90028 Growth	<i>E.coli</i> ATCC25922 Inhibition	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used	Batches			

8.15. Name of media: **Blood Muller Hinton Sensitivity Test Agar**

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: CO2, 48-72h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	P H	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							<i>S.pyogenes</i> ATCC 19615	<i>S.pnuemonia</i> ATCC 49619	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.16. Name of media: Thiosulfate Citrate Bile salts Sucrose Agar (TCBS) Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: Aerobic, 48-72h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							<i>V.parahemolyticus</i> ATCC 17802	<i>M.morganii</i> ATCC 8019	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.17. Name of media: Vancomycin/Lincomycin/Ccolistin/Amphotericin/Trimethoprim (VLCAT) Agar

Incubation: CO2, 24-48h, 35C

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							<i>N.gonorrhoeae</i> ATCC 43069	<i>E.coli</i> ATTC 25922	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.18. Name of media: **Lysed Schedler Anaerobic Agar** **Expiry Date**

Month/Year

Incubation: Anaerobic, 48H, 35°C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No Plates	Sterility check	Quality Control Check		PASS/FAIL	Signature
							<i>B.fragilis</i> ATCC 25285	<i>P.aeruginosa</i> ATCC 27853		
							Growth	Inhibition		
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.19. Name of media: Sorbitol MacConkey agar Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: O2, 18- 24H, 35°C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No Plates	Sterility check	Quality Control Check		PASS/FAIL	Signature
							E.coli ATCC 25922	Ecoli 0157:H7 Non-toxigenic NCTC12900		
							Growth: pink colonies Sorbitol positive	Growth: straw colonies Sorbitol negative		
Quantity Made:			Plates used:			Batches:				

8.20. Name of media: Yersinia Agar

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: CO2, 24 and 48h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							Y.enterocolitica (clinical isolate)	<i>Ecoli</i> ATCC 25922	PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Growth. Transparent Red bull eye	Inhibition		
Total	Quantity Made				No Plates used			No Batches		

8.21. Name of media: **Haemophilus Test Medium Base** **Expiry Date**

Month/

Incubation: CO2, 24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check				
							H.influanzae ATCC 49766	Uninoclated plate	PASS/FAIL	Signature	
							Good Growth	No Change			
Total	Quantity Made			No Plates used			No Batches				

8.22. Name of media: **Muller Hinton Sensitivity Test Agar** **Expiry Date**

Mon

Incubation: O2, 18-24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check				
							<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923	<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922	<i>P.aerugin</i> <i>osa</i> ATCC 27853	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches			

8.23. Name of media: **DNase Agar**

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: O2, 18-24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923	S.epidermidis ATCC 12228	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.24. Name of media: Desoxycholate Citrate Agar (DCA)

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: O2, 18-24h, 35-+2C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check				
							<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922	S.typhim ATCC 14028	E.faecalis ATCC 29212	PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Inhibition Partial to complete/Pink	Growth Colorless	Inhibition		
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches			

8.25. Name of media: CLED with CIP & VA for MDR Acinetobacter Screening

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: Aerobic, 24-48h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expir y Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No plate	Sterility check	Quality Control Check			PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Well characterized Clinical isolate MDRA	<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923	<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922		
							Growth	Inhibition, partial growth Deep yellow	Growth Yellow		
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used			Batches		

8.26. Name of media: Trypticase Soy Agar

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: O2, 18-24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> ATCC 10211 X-Factor: No Growth V-Factor: No Growth XV-Factor: Growth	<i>Haemophilus parainfluenzae</i> ATCC 10665 X-Factor: No Growth V-Factor: Growth XV-Factor: Growth	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.27. Name of media: Burkholderia cepacia Agar

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: O2, 18-24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							Burkholderia cepacia ATCC 25416 Good growth, grey colonies with light pink medium	Pseudomonas aeruginosa ATCC 27853 Inhibited	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches		

8.28. Name of media: **Lysed Muller Hinton Test Agar** **Expiry Date**

Incubation: O2, 18-24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check				
							<i>Bacteriod. Fragilis</i> ATCC 25285	<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922	<i>P.aerugin osa</i> ATCC 27853	PASS/FAIL	Signature
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches			

8.29. Name of media: DCA / SSA / XLD Agar

Powder Expiry Date

Month/Year

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No. plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check				
							<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922	S.typhim ATCC 14028	E.faecalis ATCC 29212	PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Inhibition Partial to complete/Pink	Growth Colorless	Inhibition		
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches			

8.30. Name of media: Brain Heart Infusion (BHI) broth with Ertapenam Expiry Date
Incubation: Aerobic, 48-72h, 35C

Month/Year

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant made	No tubes	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check				
							<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922	<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923	MDRA Acin	PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Growth	Growth	Growth		
Total	Quantity Made					Plates used		Batches			

8.31. Name of media: **Bile esculin Azide agar** Expiry date_____

Month/Year_____

Incubation: Aerobic, 18-24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Qty	No plates	Sterility check at 48 hrs	Quality Control Check			PASS/FAIL	Signature
							<i>S.agalactate Grp. B</i> ATCC 12386	<i>S.pyogenes</i> ATCC19615	<i>E.feacalis</i> ATCC 29212		
							inhibition (Partial)	inhibition (Partial)	Brown to Black pigment		
Total	Quantity Made				Batches			Plates used			

8.32. Name of media: Chocolate – Muellerhinton Agar Expiry Date

Month/Year

Incubation: CO2, 24h, 35C

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant. made	No plates	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							H.influanzae ATCC 49766	H.influanzae ATCC 49247	PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Good Growth	No Change		
Total	Quantity Made			No Pates used			No Batches			

8.33. Name of media: Nutrient slope
Incubation: Aerobic, 48-72h, 35C

Expiry Date

Month/Year

Prep. Date	Expiry Date	Lot No.	PH	Quant made	No tubes	Sterility check at 48hrs	Quality Control Check			
							<i>E.coli</i> ATCC 25922	<i>S.aureus</i> ATCC 25923	PASS/FAIL	Signature
							Growth	Growth		
Total	Quantity Made					Slopes used		Batches		