***SOP for Skin Biopsy***

Site selection

* The area from where the biopsy is to taken should be active and representative of the manifestations of leprosy. For example:

Small hypo pigmentated patch- biopsy from the centre of the lesion

Annular Macule- biopsy from active spreading edge

Multiple lesions with different morphology- more than one biopsy should be taken

Site Preparation

* Universal precautions should be observed in obtaining skin biopsy.
* Any common skin antiseptic such as isopropyl alcohol, povidone-iodine solution or chlorohexidine gluconate can be used to prepare the biopsy site.
* The area from where the biopsy is to be taken should be marked with a skin marker by the physician
* 2% lignocaine 1ml intradermally can be used as anaesthetic agent for the biopsy

Skin Biopsy

* Remove 6mm biopsy tool from sterile packaging. Keep the sharp metal tip sterile by avoiding contact with non-sterile surfaces.
* With the biopsy tool perpendicular to the skin, gently press down onto the skin
* Use a gentle twisting motion in one direction with slight downward pressure to cut through all the layers of skin including epidermis, dermis, and the most superficial parts of the subcutaneous fat.
* Gently pull out the tool at a 45-degree angle, avoiding damage to the sample.
* Use tweezers or a 25-gauge needle to gently grasp the biopsy and pull the sample up and out and immediately transfer skin piece to biopsy vial.
* Ensure that tissue is fully submerged in 10% formalin. Close the cap tightly. ***Each biopsy should be placed in a separate vial*.**
* Apply hemostatic agent to stop the bleeding and antibiotic ointment to sampling area. For larger biopsies, a suture may be needed.
* Using an alcohol-resistant marker, label the biopsy vial with an identifier that matches ***exactly*** what is indicated on the specimen form. Check to make sure that each vial is easy to identify with the information provided on the form.

***Required information to include on the form****:*

* *Patient ID*
* *Name of study site*
* *Date of tissue collection*
* *Type of lesion*
* *Any other important information*
* Add a thin layer of Parafilm around the vial covering the seal.
* Use about 3 inches of newspaper or bubble wrap to ensure that the vials are safely shipped.