



CAHPPEI

College of
Allied Health Professionals
of Prince Edward Island

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLT)

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INTRODUCTION

Standards of practice have been established to evaluate the quality and accuracy of a Medical Laboratory Technologist's work performance. In the province of Prince Edward Island, Medical Laboratory Technologists are self-regulated. These standards in part help in the development of the regulated individuals. These standards allow regulated technologists, clients, and the public to understand how Medical Laboratory Technologists are expected to perform, at all times, within their scope of practice. It is expected that these standards will evolve over time and adjustments will be made to meet changes in the profession.

Established national standards indicate the minimum accepted standards for Medical Laboratory Technologists in Canada. The provincial regulatory body has developed specific standards that have been separated into six sections:

1. Professional Responsibility and Accountability
2. Knowledge
3. Practical Skills - Competency and Proficiency in the Laboratory
4. Communication and Collaboration
5. Safety
6. Quality Management

These topics help to form the expectations that current, and future, members can use as the minimum standards to which they will be held. Members can gain ideas for their professional development from standards given here. These topics can be also used while considering disciplinary issues, complaints, and continuing competency studies. It is expected that Medical Laboratory Technologists will use these standards in order to properly provide the services within their scope of practice.

1. Professional Responsibility & Accountability

Medical Laboratory Technologists are expected to meet the legal and ethical requirements of their professional practice. They are accountable to the client, the employer, the college, and themselves for the services that they provide.

All Medical Laboratory Technologists shall:

- A. Practice in accordance with regulations, bylaws, standards, and relevant legislation (PEI Regulated Health Professions Act) [expand].
- B. Practice within the scope of their professional competency while adhering to institutional and laboratory policies.
- C. Maintain and demonstrate professional behaviour and sound judgement appropriate to the situation.
- D. Accept responsibility and be accountable for the consequences of their professional actions and inactions.
- E. Ensure confidentiality and respect for the client's rights.
- F. Exercise the right to refuse unsafe work practices.
- G. Participate in and document, all self-development activities to ensure continued professional competency and to further the understanding of legal and ethical requirements of the profession.
- H. Participate in mentoring, teaching, and supervising as required.

2. Knowledge

Medical Laboratory Technologists possess in-depth knowledge regarding the theory, techniques, and clinical application of procedures related to medical laboratory science. Technologists utilize this professional, legal, and ethical knowledge in current practice while continuously improving their education in this ever-evolving field.

All Medical Laboratory Technologists shall:

- A. Possess the minimum level of knowledge required as an entrance to practice and be able to apply that knowledge competently in their professional practice.
- B. Understand the intricate relationship between analyses, diagnoses, clinical information, and treatment.
- C. Keep current knowledge with new medical trends, novel practises, conditions and diseases, as well as understand their impact on various medical laboratory services.
- D. Demonstrate awareness of the standards, requirements, and legislation that govern the delivery of laboratory services.

3. Practical Skills – Competency & Proficiency in Lab Practice

Medical Laboratory Technologists must follow approved guidelines, protocols, and procedures to ensure the appropriateness and suitability of all specimens used in laboratory testing.

Medical Laboratory Technologists combine the competent performance of tests, based on the current principles of medical laboratory science, with the accurate and timely reporting of results to provide information for diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring of clients.

All Medical Laboratory Technologists shall:

- A. Protect and respect the rights of the client/patient including obtaining consent for procedures.
- B. Ensure correct information is obtained for proper specimen collection and analysis.
- C. Properly accession, identify, document, store, and transport specimens in a retrievable manner following the appropriate guidelines and policies.
- D. Apply professional judgement in assessing the integrity and suitability of specimens set for examination.
- E. Identify and use appropriate techniques for preparing specimens for analyses.
- F. Be trained and competent in the operation and maintenance of all equipment utilized.
- G. Be able to recognize, troubleshoot, and document issues with equipment, instruments, and reagents while ensuring any appropriate corrective actions are undertaken in a timely fashion.
- H. Have a clear understanding of all of the steps involved in the procedures they perform.
- I. Prioritize workflow in accordance with appropriate policies and procedures.
- J. Use critical thinking to systematically evaluate and analyze information regarding result assessment and validation as well as result interpretation and reporting.
- K. Understand and interpret critical values, reference ranges, and detection limits of each technique.
- L. Take appropriate action to any adverse events discovered during testing.

4. Communication and Collaboration

The Medical Laboratory Technologist must communicate and collaborate effectively with clients, colleagues, and other health care professionals to ensure best practice, quality, and client-centered care.

4.1 Communication

All Medical Laboratory Technologists shall:

- A. Articulate the role of Medical Laboratory Technologists in the planning, developing, delivering, and evaluation of client care.
- B. Select and use effective verbal, non-verbal, listening, and written communication skills for the intended audience.
- C. Communicate with professionalism, sensitivity, respect, and empathy.
- D. Provide timely, constructive, and thoughtful feedback to learners.
- E. Manage conflict, including issues related to conflicts of interest, in a professional manner.
- F. Document issues and take appropriate actions.

4.2 Collaboration

All Medical Laboratory Technologists shall:

- A. Promote understanding of the Medical Laboratory Technologist role and its relationship to other health care professionals.
- B. Co-operate with and show respect for all members of the health care team.
- C. Facilitate the sharing of knowledge with students, peers, other health care professionals, and clients.
- D. Develop collaborative relationships with other health care professionals.
- E. Collaborates respectfully with colleagues in order to maintain a psychologically healthy work environment.

5. Safety

Medical Laboratory Technologists will act in accordance with established safety guidelines, protocols, and legislation while also focusing on the environmental impact of their actions.

All Medical Laboratory Technologists shall:

- A. Utilize all health and safety measures in order to keep one's self, clients/patients, colleagues, the public, and the environment safe and protected.
- B. Utilize appropriate personal protective equipment and safety devices.
- C. Read, understand, and utilize all relevant protocols regarding handling, preserving, and shipping biological specimens.
- D. Read, understand, and utilize all relevant protocols regarding the storage, handling, and disposal of biological, toxic, and potentially-hazardous materials.
- E. Read, understand, and utilize all emergency safety response measures and plans.
- F. Lead by example in issues relevant to safety, and help others to maintain a safe work space.
- G. Remain current in practices and standards related to infection control, and work to include newer practices and standards in workplace guidelines.
- H. Report adverse events, unsafe work practices, and ergonomic deficiencies in a complete and timely fashion.
- I. Understand the importance of mental health in the workplace and work to maintain a healthy work environment.

6. Quality Management

Medical Laboratory Technologists understand, apply, and promote the principles of quality management in the delivery of laboratory services to ensure the accuracy, integrity, and timeliness of all laboratory results.

All Medical Laboratory Technologists shall:

- A. Adhere to employer policies, processes, and procedures.
- B. Apply quality control and quality assurance principles in all phases of laboratory practice, including specimen procurement, processing, analysis, interpretation, and reporting.
- C. Demonstrate awareness of key quality indicators and test utilization principles related to the field of laboratory medicine.
- D. Recognize non-conformances, determine appropriate corrective action, and participate in process improvement activities.
- E. Utilize, update, and maintain all appropriate documents as necessary.
- F. Properly utilize resources in a manner which maintains efficiency and effectiveness while minimizing waste.
- G. Participate in internal and external audits and accreditations.
- H. Participate in initiatives with the goal of improving quality in all relevant aspects of the laboratory.

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Glossary:

Accountability: “Taking responsibility for decisions and actions, including those undertaken independently or collectively as a member of the health care team.” (CMLTO, 2007)

Client: a person or organization using the services of the medical laboratory technologist

Client centred care: “Providing care that is respectful of, and responsive to, individual client preferences, needs and values, and ensuring that client values guide all clinical decisions.” (OneView, 2015).

Competency: “Translate the requisite knowledge, skills, and judgement into specific actions to ensure safe, effective, and ethical outcomes.” (CMLTO, 2007)

Non-conformance: “Non-conformance: occurs when there is a deviation from established policies and procedures or when a product or service does not meet the client's expectations.” (LabCE, 2018)

Quality Assurance: “All the planned and systematic activities implemented within the quality system that can be demonstrated to provide confidence that a product or service will fulfill requirements for quality.” (Russell, J.P., 2012).

Quality Control: “Quality control in the medical laboratory is a statistical process used to monitor and evaluate the analytical process that produces patient results.” (Cooper, G., 2009, pg. 2)

Quality indicator: “A tool that enables the user to quantify the quality of a selected aspect of care by comparing it with a criterion.” (AHRQ, 2017)

Reagent: a substance or mixture for use in chemical analysis or other reactions.

Standards: “Something established by authority, custom, or general consent as a model or example.” (NBSMLT, 2012)

Standards of Practice: “A minimum level of defined behaviours, competencies and practices that expected of a professional.” (NBSMLT, 2012)