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## **NBSMLT Position Statement Regarding diagnostic cytotechnologist without a general MLT designation performing analysis outside their scope of practice-Semen analysis**

The New Brunswick Society of Medical Laboratory Technologists (NBSMLT) is the regulatory body for Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs) in New Brunswick with a primary role in protection of the public with regard to medical laboratory services.

The Medical Laboratory Technology Act of New Brunswick (the Act), signed in 1991, protects the practice of Medical Laboratory Technology. The Act defines MLT practice as, “the performance of laboratory investigations relating to the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease and the evaluation of their technical validity, on specimens taken from the human body.” The Act also protects the use of the MLT title designation, in that no one may hold themselves out to be an MLT in the province of New Brunswick unless they are registered in good standing with the NBSMLT.

The legislation in New Brunswick does not allow for reserved acts, meaning only certain professionals are able to perform certain tasks, i.e., venipuncture, embedding and grossing, etc. In New Brunswick, there may be an overlap, with several regulated health professionals having the same task or act within their defined scope of practice. As in the case with cytotechnologist and general MLT, there may be overlap in their scope of practice. The issue arises when a task or act is being performed by a professional when it is not within their scope of practice.

Cytotechnologists who hold a diagnostic cytology specific license are subject to the cytology competency profile. Body fluid analysis, including normal semen analysis, is outside of the listed competencies for Diagnostic Cytology MLTs that are certified through CSMLS. A CSMLS-issued professional liability insurance (PLI) would not cover this analysis. Their competency profile expects them to perform staining “techniques” to demonstrate cellular and non-cellular components in body fluids, not analysis that a General MLT is expected to perform. General MLT licensed that have acquired additional cytology certification are permitted to perform this analysis as it is covered in the general MLT competency profile.

The NBSMLT does not support the practice of Diagnostic Cytologists performing semen analysis, as it poses a significant risk to the public. However, should an employer request that a duty defined under the General MLT scope be delegated to a cytotechnologist, it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure and prove proper education, training, and competence have been achieved and have proper PLI. Ongoing competency assessments and continuing education are required. The NBSMLT discourages this practice, as it carries significant risk to patient safety by having a cytotechnologist perform duties which are not defined under their Scope of Practice. We encourage cytotechnologist’s performing semen analysis to seek expanded PLI through CSMLS to add competencies in the General MLT competency profile to their PLI.



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The NBSMLT continues to monitor its members to make certain they are performing tasks within their competency profiles are competent and have proper professional liability insurance to ensure public safety.