



NEW BRUNSWICK SOCIETY OF MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGISTS

Standards of Practice for MLT - 2012

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Definitions

Pre-Analytical : Pre-analytical refers to activities that pertain to patient preparation and instructions, test ordering, and the collection, transportation, reception and preparation of a specimen prior to analysis and the associated documentation.

Post-Analytical: Post-analytical refers to activities that pertain to the collation, release and communication of results of an analysis including authorization and the associated documentation.

Standards : something established by authority, custom, or general consent as a model or example

Standards of Practice: a minimum level of defined behaviours, competencies and practices that are expected of a professional

Protocols: a detailed plan of a scientific or medical experiment, treatment, or procedure

Scope of Practice: A profession's scope of practice encompasses the activities its practitioners are educated and authorized to perform. The overall scope of practice for the profession sets the outer limits of practice for all practitioners. The actual scope of practice of individual practitioners is influenced by the settings in which they practice, the requirements of the employer and the needs of their patients or

clients. Although it can be difficult to define precisely, scope of practice is important because it is the base from which governing bodies prepare standards of practice, educational institutions prepare curricula, and employers prepare job descriptions. (http://www.cna-aiic.ca/CNA/practice/scope/default_e.aspx)

Accountability: the quality or state of being accountable; especially: an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions

Preamble

The practice of Medical Laboratory Technology is defined in *An Act Respecting the New Brunswick Society of Medical Laboratory Technologists*, assented in 1991. Medical Technology is defined as:

the performance of laboratory investigation 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 confers upon the New Brunswick Society of Medical Laboratory Technologists (NBSMLT), the responsibility to regulate the profession of Medical Laboratory Technology in New Brunswick for the benefit and safe-guarding of the public. One of the most important aspects of a self-regulating profession is the ability to define expectations of its members.

The Legislation, Regulations, Bylaws, Rules and Standards of Practice collectively establish the governance of the practice of Medical Laboratory Technology. These Standards of Practice define the general attributes that Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs) must have in order to be considered competent. They are based on a realistic and attainable ideal.

The CSMLS standards of practice are an essential aspect of the MLT's competencies. The NBSMLT standards of practice outline the legal and professional accountabilities for members of the NBSMLT. Members must be able to demonstrate adherence with each of the seven components of these standards as measured by the criteria listed. The NSBMLT may refer to these Standards of Practice to determine if professional responsibilities have been met by members.

The MLT is formally defined as a person whose name is entered in the register as a MLT. This translates to a person who has acquired and maintains the professional knowledge and competencies related to their field of practice in Medical Laboratory Technology including the following eight areas:

1. Knowledge

Medical laboratory technologists comprehend and adhere to all professional, legal and ethical requirements governing the practice of the profession. MLTs possess in-depth scientific knowledge of the theory, techniques, and clinical application of medical laboratory procedures.

Medical laboratory technologists shall:

- a. Maintain current knowledge of all applicable
 - i. provincial and federal legislation regulating the profession
 - ii. NBSMLT regulations, consolidated bylaws, , standards, and guidelines
 - iii. Code of Ethics
 - iv. institutional policies and procedures.
- b. Maintain competence and effectively enhance his or her knowledge, skill and application of relevant medical laboratory procedures.
- c. Enhance the profession through the sharing of knowledge and information with members of the health care team.

2. Application of Knowledge and Skills

The medical laboratory technologist combines the competent performance of tests, based on the current principles of medical laboratory sciences, with the accurate and timely reporting of results to provide reliable information for the diagnosis/monitoring of each patient/client.

Medical laboratory technologists shall:

- a. Apply the relevant knowledge, technical skills and professional judgment to perform all procedures undertaken in the course of practising the profession.
- b. Adhere to institutional and laboratory policies and ensure all processes are performed according to approved procedures.
- c. Initiate and maintain accurate records.
- d. Discontinue patient procedures if informed consent is withdrawn at any time by the patient or patient's substitute decision maker.
- e. Safely transport and store specimens in a manner that maintains specimen integrity and quality.
- f. Analyze data for the purposes of quality control and verification of test results.
- g. Demonstrate competence as outlined in the current CSMLS Competency Profile.
- h. Assume responsibility for professional development to ensure continued competence.

3. Safe Work Practices

Medical laboratory technologists practice according to established protocols, safety guidelines, relevant current provincial and federal legislation, institutional policies and procedures, and environmental considerations.

Medical laboratory technologists shall:

- a. Apply health and safety measures at all times to ensure the safety and protection of patients, colleagues, self and the environment.
- b. Demonstrate competence in established workplace safety practices.
- c. Use appropriate personal protective equipment and laboratory safety devices.
- d. Adhere to Standard Precautions and apply current and emerging infection control practices and occupational health standards.
- e. Safely store, handle and dispose of biological, toxic and radioactive material.
- f. Understand and apply current regulations for the handling, preservation and safe shipment of all biological and other potentially hazardous material.

- g. Provide leadership to other members of the health care team pertaining to relevant safety issues.
- h. Comply with all established emergency preparedness plans when required.
- i. Promote the reduction and elimination of environmental hazards where possible.

4: Pre-Analysis (Specimen Procurement and Handling)

Medical Laboratory Technologists verify relevant data and ensure that appropriate specimens are procured and handled in accordance with established protocols.

Medical laboratory technologists shall:

- a. Ensure that all relevant information is obtained for correct specimen collection and analysis.
- b. Treat all patients with courtesy and respect, ensuring that their rights are protected and their consent obtained.
- c. Ensure proper identification of the patient and specimen.
- d. Provide the explanations necessary for the patients to understand the specimen collection procedure.
- e. Apply proper protocol for specimen accessioning, identification, documentation and storage in a retrievable manner.
- f. Exercise judgment in assessing the integrity and suitability of specimens for examination.
- g. Identify and use the most appropriate techniques for preparing specimens for analysis.
- h. Assess and organize the workload to optimize efficiency and quality of patient care.
- i. Provide appropriate instruction to health care workers responsible for collection, transportation, documentation and storage of specimens.
- j. Know and follow accepted isolation and safety procedures.
- k. Know and follow the standard rules for the transportation of biological products and infectious materials.

5. Analysis (Analytical Techniques and Instrumentation)

Medical laboratory technologists understand the principles and perform analytical techniques on a variety of specimens and ensure accuracy of analyses by using appropriate quality assurance protocols.

Medical laboratory technologists shall:

- a. Ensure that all infectious and hazardous substances are handled in accordance with current safety guidelines and legislation.
- b. Identify the type of specimen required and evaluate the quality and suitability of specimens before performing the analysis.
- c. Refuse to accept inadequate and/or poorly identified specimens and request new specimens when necessary. When this is impossible, institutional policies must be followed to accept irreplaceable specimens under consideration.
- d. Understand and apply the principles of the analysis performed.
- e. Know the various steps in the analysis performed.

- f. Be proficient with the use, operation and maintenance of the equipment employed.
- g. Understand and interpret reference intervals, critical values, and detection limits of the techniques performed.
- h. Know about possible interferences and take appropriate action.
- i. Ensure accuracy of patient results by participating in a quality assurance program.
- j. Ensure that the procedure manual in place and is up to date and appropriately maintained.
- k. Report valid results in a timely manner.
- l. Transport and store specimens in a manner that maintains specimen integrity and quality.
- m. Perform analysis only when appropriately authorized.

6. Post Analysis

Medical laboratory technologists evaluate the technical validity of test results and ensure that reports are issued in an appropriate and timely manner.

Medical laboratory technologists shall:

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between clinical information, laboratory analyses and diagnosis.
- b. Identify results that are outside expected findings or clinically established reference ranges and ensure that appropriate action taken.
- c. Release results of laboratory analyses that meet quality control criteria in a timely and efficient manner.
- d. Communicate information regarding laboratory analyses to clients in a manner that is appropriate.
- e. Ensure that laboratory results remain confidential and are accurately documented and retained in accordance with established policy and existing legislation.

7. Quality Management

Medical laboratory technologists practice and promote the principles of quality management in the delivery of laboratory services.

Medical laboratory technologists shall:

- a. Meet the established standards for quality control in specimen procurement, preparation, analysis, interpretation, and reporting.
- b. Ensure the accurate and timely reporting of results.
- c. Follow established protocols as defined in policy and procedure manuals.
- d. Participate in internal and external quality assurance programs.
- e. Practice efficient and cost-effective resource utilization.
- f. Produce and maintain relevant and accurate documentation.
- g. Identify and communicate recommendations for laboratory service improvement, in keeping with patient safety and customer satisfaction.
- h. Recognize and report nonconformance to technical standards.

8. Professional Responsibility and Accountability

Medical laboratory technologists comprehend and meet the ethical, legal and professional expectations of their practice. They exercise independent judgment, accept responsibility for their actions and recognize their accountability for the service they provide.

Medical laboratory technologists shall:

- a. Practice in accordance with the relevant legislation, regulations, bylaws, rules and standards.
- b. Ensure and protect the confidentiality and privacy of the individual and their dignity.
- c. Collaborate and communicate effectively and share their knowledge with patients, colleagues and other health professionals to provide the best care possible.
- d. Actively participate in self-directed professional development and be accountable for the documentation and demonstration of their continued competence.
- e. Take responsibility for their actions and the foreseeable consequences of their actions.
- f. Recognize the limits of their professional practice as defined in the NBSMLT scope of practice and seek support when requested to practice beyond their skills/competencies.