

Laboratory Services Act Implementation UPDATE

Since the Enactment of the *Laboratory Services Act...*

There have been a number of developments since the enactment of the *Laboratory Services Act* (the LSA) on October 1, 2015. This update describes the establishment of the BC Clinical and Support Services Society and the Agency for Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, as well as the launching of the Ministry of Health's Laboratory Operational Committee.



BC Clinical and Support Services Society

In late September 2015, the BC Government established the BC Clinical and Support Services (BCCSS) Society. The mandate of the Society is to promote health in the province through:

- ◆ Coordinating, managing and/or providing clinical, diagnostic and support services to BC's health care system for the benefit of all users of BC's health care system.
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining one or more divisions which shall have such purposes and responsibilities determined by the Society from time to time for the coordination, management and provision of clinical, diagnostic and support services to BC's health care system for the benefit of all users of BC's health care system.

Agency for Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

One of the divisions of the BCCSS Society is the Agency for Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, which will have a key role in the development of a planned and purposeful process for the delivery and integration, of laboratory services. (Refer to page 2 for more details.)

The BCCSS Society is in the process of undertaking the governance and planning functions with two separate divisions: a clinical division that is responsible for provincial planning of the laboratory services system under the LSA, and a business division that is responsible for a range of common, non-clinical services like technology and finance services to the health authorities – currently provided by Health Shared Services BC (HSSBC). As such, HSSBC will transition to the BCCSS Society on April 1, 2016. In addition, as of April 1, 2016, the Society will also oversee the Provincial Blood Coordinating Office (PBCO), currently governed by the Provincial Health Services Authority. The PBCO has a leadership role in transfusion medicine and is responsible for the transfusion medicine quality standards on the utilization management of blood and blood products.

The Agency for Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

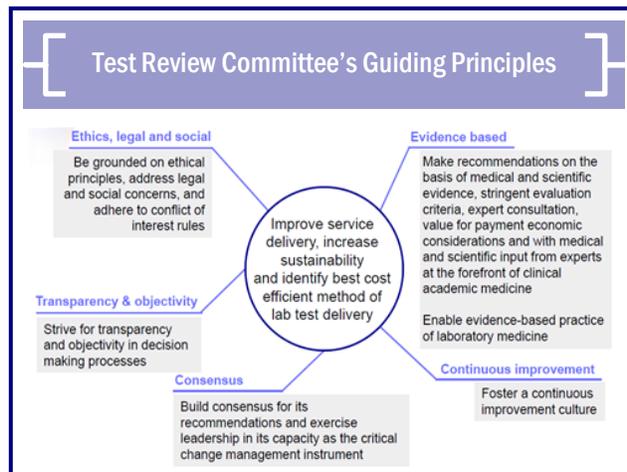
As one of the first divisions of the BCCSS Society, the Agency for Pathology and Laboratory Medicine (the “Agency”) will aim to ensure that clinical laboratory diagnostics are sustainable, quality driven and continue to innovate to support B.C.’s citizens and clinicians with access to the best laboratory services. The Agency will develop a strategic business plan for the provision of laboratory services in B.C.

The initial mandate of the Agency will include, but is not limited to:

- ◆ Strategic Oversight
- ◆ Funding
- ◆ Efficiency/Effectiveness
- ◆ Quality
- ◆ Human Resources/Education

Test Review Process & Test Review Committee

To support the introduction of new laboratory tests and the review of existing laboratory tests, the Ministry of Health requested the Agency develop and implement a test review process. This process is conducted by the Test Review Committee (TRC), a standing operational unit reporting to the Agency. The TRC is responsible for reviewing, evaluating and making



evidence-based recommendations regarding the introduction, replacement or elimination of publicly-funded clinical laboratory tests (including inpatient, outpatient, out-of-province). The test review process entails a stringent evaluation criteria, expert consultation, value for payment economic considerations and with medical and scientific input from experts at the forefront of clinical academic medicine. Underlining this formal framework is the TRC’s goal to

ensure fair and transparent laboratory test review and adjudication processes. The TRC’s recommendations are reported to the Agency, which then forwards the recommendations to the Ministry of Health for final decision.

The current interim structure of the TRC is 6 standing voting members, the Chair and 2 ex-officio members – all who have expertise in clinical laboratory medicine. The members of the TRC are as follows: Dr. Louis Wadsworth (Chair), Dr. John Galbraith, Dr. Lawrence Haley, Dr. Michael Allard, Dr. Morris Pudek, Mr. Richard Walker, and Ms. Sherrie Warren. The ex-officio members are Dr. Ian Dubé and Mr. John Andruschak. The TRC will meet ten times per year, or as required by the Agency or call of the Chair. The TRC held its inaugural meeting on December 2, 2015.

The Ministry of Health's Laboratory Operational Committee

In the fall of 2015, the Ministry of Health established the Laboratory Operational Committee (LOC). Bringing together representatives of major stakeholders in the laboratory services sector, including laboratory medicine physicians, referring practitioners, medical laboratory technologists, health authorities, publicly-funded laboratory facilities, and the general public, the 10-member LOC is mandated to provide the Ministry with advice and guidance on laboratory operational issues, including but not limited to:

- ◆ Approvals (and cancellations) regarding the provision of benefits, fees, testing technology;
- ◆ Approvals of new and changes to existing laboratory requisitions;
- ◆ The development and implementation of laboratory protocols and guidelines;
- ◆ Policy issues that may impact the quality of services, care of patients and/or the delivery of laboratory services in the province;
- ◆ Other initiatives that may optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of various aspects of the laboratory system;
- ◆ Appoint sub-committees or working groups of the LOC, at the discretion of the Chair in consultation with the Ministry, if required to support the LOC in achieving its mandate; and,
- ◆ Any other matter which the Ministry may refer to the LOC from time to time.

The Ministry of Health established the Laboratory Operational Committee to provide the Ministry with timely access to expert advice and guidance when making critical operational decisions under the *Laboratory Services Act*.



Nominations for the clinical/medical members were sought through an “Expression of Interest” process that was promoted through the leaders of relevant stakeholder groups, such as, the Health Authorities, the laboratory operators (public and private), the Doctors of British Columbia, and the boards/councils of relevant professional colleges or associations. Recruitment for the public member is currently underway.

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Membership of the LOC

The current membership of the LOC is as follows:

Representatives of the BC Government (Ministry of Health):

Ms. Jane Crickmore – Chair

Ms. Angela Deering – Vice-Chair

Clinical Scientist:

Dr. Kent Dooley (Chemistry Discipline Head & Clinical Chemist, LifeLabs)

Laboratory Medicine Physicians:

Dr. Gordon Hoag (Medical Director, Department of Laboratory Medicine, Pathology & Medical Genetics, Vancouver Island Health Authority)

Dr. Michael Moss (Regional Medical Director, Laboratory Services, Interior Health Authority)

Medical Laboratory Technologist:

Ms. Darlene Mueller (Technical Practice Lead for Transfusion Medicine, Fraser Health Authority)

Referring Practitioner:

Ms. Janice Brown (Nurse Practitioner, Vancouver Island Health Authority)

Representatives of a Publicly-Funded Laboratory Facility:

Mr. Edward Ratnarajah (Executive Director - Operations of Lower Mainland Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, Provincial Health Services Authority)

Mr. Ken Winnig (Regional Director of Diagnostic Services, Northern Health Authority)

Secretariat support to the LOC is provided by Ministry of Health employee, Ms. Keira Drake.

The LOC will aim to meet at least 6 times per year. The inaugural meeting was held on January 21, 2016, in Victoria, BC.

The LOC is currently scheduled to meet on:
March 11, 2016
May 12, 2016
July 21, 2016
September 29, 2016



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