

Educational Statement Regarding Doctoral Level Clinical Laboratory Science Professionals (V. 7-6-2007)

Problem

Missing in the continuity of health care are enough scientists and physicians within the Clinical Laboratory or elsewhere on the health care team who are totally dedicated to the effective use of laboratory test information and who have the breadth of knowledge and assigned authority essential to the ordering of appropriate laboratory tests, effective consultation with other health care team members, direct communication with patients, review of patient records, and interpretation/application of laboratory generated information in reference to clinical signs and symptoms. A Clinical Laboratory Science Professional holding a Doctoral Degree (DCLS) is needed to provide the critical interface across the health care system in order to assure improved patient outcomes and cost effective patient care.

Key Assumptions

1. Today, patients and their families want to be well informed and active participants in the delivery of their health care.
2. Individuals have the right to receive explanations and information regarding their laboratory test data.
3. Because of the complexities of testing and emerging technologies, primary care providers expect assistance in selecting appropriate laboratory tests and interpreting laboratory test results.
4. The ordering of inappropriate laboratory tests delays diagnoses, prevents the beginning of effective treatment, lengthens inpatient stays, and increases costs.
5. Payors for health care deserve a system of delivery that assures laboratory testing is cost-effective and efficient.
6. All health care providers recognize that they must receive appropriate assistance related to laboratory testing.
7. Laboratory professionals must work together with all health care providers to provide universal access to cost-effective, diagnostically-efficient, and quality health care.

Aim

Creation and implementation of a doctorate in clinical laboratory science, an advanced degree that requires comprehensive knowledge of test methodologies, their limitations, pre- and post-analytical and patient circumstances that could invalidate test results; and knowledge of health

care policy and delivery systems , principles of education, research and management. This professional will provide:

1. Patient Care Management

- Develop algorithms and critical paths
- Identify anomalies and resolve discrepancies in laboratory testing
- Consult with primary care providers to:
 - Eliminate unnecessary tests
 - Assure the correct clinically important tests are ordered.

2. Education

- Disseminate and explain laboratory information to patients, and other health care professionals
- Teach the public about over the counter testing
- Teach health care professionals about Point of Care testing
- Educate physicians and other health care professionals about new tests resulting from new and emerging technologies

3. Research

- Conduct clinical research and outcomes studies and apply to clinical practice
- Develop new test methodologies
- Identify new analytes helpful in diagnoses and treatment assessment
- Determine the cost effectiveness and medical benefits of introducing new test analytes

4. Health Care Policy

- Participate on decision making teams
- Provide consultation in services reimbursement, advocacy, ethics, and human subjects oversight
- Provide expert witness testimony

5. Health Care Services Delivery and Access

- Participate in laboratory resource management, including assuring access to laboratory testing
- Participate in laboratory services administration

Support

The undersigned recognize the gap in the continuity of health care and the requisite need for a doctorally prepared individual in clinical laboratory science who has the expertise to provide the above noted services.