

BC Society of Laboratory Science

Policy

Approval of Educational Institutions: Medical Laboratory Assistant Programs

June, 2006

In November 2003 the BCSLS board imposed an 12 month moratorium on institutional applications for approval of additional medical laboratory assistant education programs. In November 2004 the moratorium was extended for another 12 months. The moratorium was due to the lack of clinical placements in accredited facilities and the uncertainty surrounding BC Laboratory Reform. In April 2005 BCSLS agreed to allow clinical placement to be arranged in accredited medical laboratories in other Canadian provinces. In January 2006 the moratorium was lifted even though there continues to be a lack of clinical placement in accredited laboratories and laboratory reform appears to be in a continuous state of change. At this time BCSLS decided that it would place a greater emphasis on scrutinizing the clinical placements arranged by new applicants and current program providers.

Note Update: March 27, 2006

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REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINING MEDICAL LABORATORY ASSISTANTS

The British Columbia Society of Laboratory Science has established standards for the training of Medical Laboratory Assistants. Graduates of educational programs approved by BCSLS are eligible to obtain a BCSLS MLA Certificate. This is a voluntary program established with the cooperation of BC educational institutes, BC employers and medical laboratory assistants. This voluntary certification program shares common standards with the voluntary program administered by the Ontario Society of Medical Technologists. In order for BCSLS to endorse any Medical Laboratory Assistant program the following standards must be met:

I Curriculum

The curriculum will be based on the "Laboratory Assistant Curriculum" prepared by the BCSLS (then BCSMT) in May 1989. This document is available to all parties interested in developing a formal training program.

- A. The Curriculum for the laboratory will include:
- The role of the Medical Laboratory Assistant
 - Professionalism, public relations, and customer focus
 - Confidentiality, medical, legal, and ethical issues
 - Interpersonal communications
 - Quality assurance / improvement
 - Anatomy and Physiology
 - Safety including WHMIS and infection control
 - Specimen Collection: Terminology and related conditions
 - Blood collection
 - Venipuncture
 - Capillary puncture
 - Urine and miscellaneous specimen collection
 - Patient preparation
 - Sample requirements
 - Specimen handling
 - Protocols and procedures for Chemistry, Hematology, Microbiology, Transfusion Medicine, Histology
 - Laboratory equipment
 - Documentation requirements
 - Test libraries
 - Transport – including TDG, storage and disposal
- B. The Cardiology section shall include:
- Electrocardiogram equipment
 - Recording electrocardiograms
 - Basis understanding of ECG interpretation

Note: Any Curriculum developed by a teaching organization shall be made available to the BCSLS for review and endorsement.

II ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

- Secondary school graduation diploma or acceptable equivalent
- English language proficiency; both reading comprehension and oral skills
- Keyboarding skills of 40 wpm
- Up to date immunization program

III FACULTY

Qualified staff shall carry out training: the laboratory section taught by a Registered Medical Laboratory Technologist and the electro-cardiography section by a Registered Cardiology Technologist. Other sections including the practical sections shall be taught by appropriately qualified person. All instructors shall have relevant experience in his/her field.

IV LENGTH

The length of the program that includes both didactic and clinical practicum will be a minimum of four (4) months or the equivalent of 360 hours (didactic) and 120 hours (clinical practicum).

V EVALUATION

Successful completion shall be based on assessment of both theoretical knowledge (examination) and practical application (practicum performance evaluation).

VI ADVISORY BOARDS

The BCSLS requires that it be kept informed of any changes or developments regarding the training programs. Ongoing communication can be facilitated by the presence of BCSLS appointed representative to serve on the advisory board of the training program.

VII INSTITUTE APPLICATION FEE

When applying for BCSLS approval, an educational institution must submit the payment of the current application fee to BCSLS. The standard fee is \$1000.

The educational institution may also be required to pay additional fees if

- a site visit is required for approval. The fee applied will cover the cost of the site visit, i.e. inspector's travel costs and honorarium.
- supplemental investigation of the application is required to establish the credentials of the institution, instructor or content of the educational program.

Date Approved: *October 01, 1997. Amended September 24, 2003, November 2004, March 2006, June 2006*