



College of Medical
Laboratory Technologists
of Ontario

Standards of Practice

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians Standards of Practice

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Introduction

Standards of Practice reflect the expectations of competent practice by Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians included on the College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario (CMLTO) Voluntary Roster, and define the minimum levels of performance against which actual professional practice is compared.

Health regulatory Colleges may use these Standards of Practice to explain the responsibilities of Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians to their stakeholders and the public in a meaningful and understandable manner. Legislation, regulations, bylaws, code of ethics, standards of practice and practice guidelines collectively establish a framework for the practice of medical laboratory science technology.

Standards of Practice:

- Guide the professional practice of Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians.
- Represent the minimum standards of professional behaviour and ethical conduct expected of all Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians.
- Apply to Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians at all times in all dimensions of professional practice, including technical and nontechnical fields such as education, administration, quality assurance, and research.
- Specify the minimum standards against which Registered Medical Laboratory Technician's performance will be judged when undertaking the activities required for safe and effective professional practice.
- Promote the continuing competence of Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians by helping them identify opportunities for professional practice improvement.

Standards of Practice will evolve from time to time in response to regulatory, legal, and ethical expectations and are adopted after stakeholder consultation.



Standards of Practice and Indicators

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians must be able to demonstrate knowledge, skill and appropriate judgment in the standards described in this document, and maintain those standards for services delivered, either alone or in collaboration with a multidisciplinary team.

Each Standard of Practice is followed by a list of 'indicators' which illustrate how each Standard of Practice is met. Indicators are guidelines to assist in determining if a specific Standard of Practice has been achieved. Indicators may not be applicable in all settings and are not exhaustive, nor are the Standards of Practice listed in order of importance.

Professional Conduct and Accountability

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians are expected to meet the ethical, legal and professional expectations of practice and are accountable to the patient/client, themselves, the employer and the College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario (CMLTO). Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians strengthen excellence in professional practice by supporting the development and use of new knowledge.

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians shall:

- Use a patient-centered approach to facilitate and deliver safe and comprehensive medical laboratory services to patients and clients.
- Understand and comply with the ethical, legal and professional expectations of their practice.
- Exercise independent judgment, assume responsibility and accept accountability for professional practice and fitness to practice.
- Practice within the scope of their professional competence and adhere to institutional and laboratory policies and ensure processes are performed according to approved procedures.



- When requested to practice beyond their scope of practice, follow appropriate delegation processes, and seek appropriate support and guidance from medical laboratory technologists (MLT) to protect the public.
- Assume responsibility for professional development and invest time, effort and resources to maintain and enhance competence in areas of professional practice.
- Protect the public, above all other considerations, by promoting and maintaining high standards in professional practice, and reporting unsafe practice or professional misconduct.
- Protect the client/patients' welfare and right to respect, autonomy, dignity and comply with applicable privacy legislation and policies relating to confidentiality and access to information.
- Maintain first aid training if involved in direct patient contact in order to intervene in the case of an emergency.

Knowledge and Skill

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians possess scientific knowledge of the current theory, techniques, and clinical application of medical laboratory procedures, congruent with their education and training, and integrate this with knowledge from other laboratory specialties. To ensure ongoing enhancement of knowledge and continued competence over the span of their professional career, Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians maintain an up-to-date knowledge of trends, new and emerging diseases, and evolving practices in medical care that impact laboratory services.

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians shall:

- Demonstrate competence in judgment and interpretive skills to ensure the accurate, precise, and verifiable performance of laboratory processes and procedures, congruent with their education and training.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the current theory, technique and clinical application of laboratory analyses, which is relevant, adequate, and appropriate to each area of professional practice and are skilled in the performance of those procedures.



- Integrate the principles, techniques, and methodologies of evidence based medical laboratory science.
- Adhere to institution-specific policies, procedures, and protocols and recognize and deal appropriately with abnormal situations related to test results, methods and quality control.
- Display professional behaviour that is appropriate to the situation.
- Promote and implement interdisciplinary and interprofessional professional practice by effectively sharing knowledge with clients / patients, colleagues, MLTs and other healthcare practitioners.
- Demonstrate the ability to adapt to the changing needs of the clients / patients, the profession and the health care system.

Application of Knowledge and Skill

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians combine the competent performance of laboratory processes and procedures, congruent with their education and training, based on the current principles of medical laboratory sciences. Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians collaborate and communicate effectively with clients / patients, MLTs and other health care providers to ensure the safe and effective delivery of service.

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians shall:

- Evaluate and analyze relevant information to facilitate continuous improvement of the laboratory process in the interest of quality patient care.
- Treat all clients / patients with courtesy and respect, ensuring that their rights are protected and their consent obtained to facilitate the provision of safe, effective and comprehensive medical laboratory services.
- Apply the principles, techniques, and methodologies of evidence based medical laboratory science knowledge acquired through education, experience and research findings.



- Recognize, troubleshoot and document equipment, instrument and reagent malfunction and initiate corrective action in a timely manner; be proficient with the use, operation and maintenance of the equipment employed.
- Follow appropriate guidelines, protocols and local institutional policies to ensure that only adequate and appropriate specimens are procured and used for laboratory testing.
- Collaborate effectively with health professionals and patients to ensure best practice and patient centered care, including the provision of appropriate instructions regarding collection, transportation, documentation and storage of specimens.
- Understand and identify the cause of issues with specimen integrity and take appropriate action, and respond to any adverse event and disclose the event to the appropriate authority to mitigate harm and prevent reoccurrence.
- Analyze data for the purposes of quality control.
- Demonstrate competence in safe professional practice in compliance with relevant current provincial and federal legislation, safety and infection prevention and control principles, practices, and policies, established institutional policies and procedures, and environmental considerations.
- Collaborate with other members of the health care team with regard to process-related, quality and safety issues.
- Manage resources and communicate effectively and respectfully in meeting the needs of patients / clients.

Quality Management

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians demonstrate an understanding of quality management principles and apply these in the delivery of medical laboratory services supporting optimal patient care.

Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians shall:



- Engage in continuous improvement; demonstrate critical thinking to analyze, synthesize, and apply information to improve the quality and effectiveness of service.
- Maintain established standards for quality control in specimen procurement and preparation, congruent with their education and training.
- Recognize nonconformance, identify and communicate recommendations for laboratory service and process improvement.
- Operate within the context of a quality system approach to external quality assessment (EQA), internal quality programs, internal quality audits and accreditation programs.

Summary

While the Standards of Practice are presented in sections as discrete activities, the Registered Medical Laboratory Technician must recognize that in practice these standards are implemented as part of daily processes and do not stand alone. Registered Medical Laboratory Technicians must utilize a combination of their knowledge, skill, judgment and attitude to adjust to changing circumstances and evolving environments.



References

College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario. (2017). *Code of Ethics for Medical Laboratory Technologists*. Toronto, Ontario. Author.

College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario. (2017). *Standards of Practice for Medical Laboratory Technologists*. Toronto, Ontario. Author.