



SSMLT Position Paper

Training and Supervision of Non-Credentialed Laboratory Personnel

The SSMLT is the professional licensing body that represents medical laboratory technologists (MLTs). The requirements to hold an MLT license in Saskatchewan ensure the safe practice, competency, currency and professional accountability of the MLTs conducting medical laboratory tests for the purpose of diagnosis and treatment. While MLTs are regulated, other laboratory personnel are not.

The Saskatchewan Society of Medical Laboratory Technologists (SSMLT) has concerns regarding the employment of non-credentialed/unsupervised personnel in medical laboratories (laboratory assistants/aides, phlebotomists, accessionists, etc.)

Fiscal restraints have forced health care facilities in Saskatchewan to utilize non-credentialed/unsupervised personnel to collect and process specimens. This practice may lead to an increase in testing errors and problems. Failure to maintain competence throughout the entire testing procedure, which includes specimen collection and processing, jeopardizes the quality of the test and ultimately the safety of the patient. Incorrect collection and processing of specimens can lead to inaccurate diagnosis and treatment of patients. This ultimately increases the cost of health care.

The SSMLT has the best resources to establish the minimum levels of competence and requirements for the training and supervision of non-credentialed laboratory personnel.

Laboratory test results have a direct impact on the diagnosis of disease and on patient treatment and follow-up. The SSMLT recognizes the need for support personnel who meet our minimum requirements. Support functions should be under the supervision of MLTs who have the responsibility for the quality of the testing performed.