



GUIDELINES ON THE ROLE OF MEDICAL LABORATORY ASSISTANTS IN CLINICAL LABORATORIES in NZ

At the 1992 Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science, a remit was passed defining the role of Medical Laboratory Assistants working in Diagnostic Medical Laboratories in New Zealand. The remit states that MLA's "perform routine tasks by following established protocols". A workshop was convened to discuss the role of MLA's in the Diagnostic Laboratory and the following guidelines were adopted.

Role

The role of a medical laboratory assistant is to perform routine tasks by following established protocols under the supervision of a registered medical laboratory scientist/technologist. Initially supervision would be direct but after suitable training and assessment it may be replaced with on site supervision by a registered medical laboratory scientist/technologist.

Recommendations

- Medical laboratory assistants may perform tasks as required by their laboratory after suitable training.
- Registered medical laboratory technologists or registered medical practitioners should maintain individual task work records for medical laboratory assistants under their supervision. This record should comprise a list of tasks in which the medical laboratory assistant has demonstrated competency.
- Medical laboratory assistants should not be required to evaluate or institute new methods or technology. They should not offer clinical advice or unauthorised result interpretation and should know when to ask for assistance or refer to a higher authority.

Adopted August 1992