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(Veterans Administration, Department of Medicine and Surgery Manual)

Part II, Evaluation Criteria

**Chapter 21, Laboratory Service
(Paragraphs 21.01 through 21.11)**

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DM&S PROGRAM EVALUATION



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CHAPTER 21. LABORATORY SERVICE

21.01 GENERAL

Scientific advances in the field of medicine have been accompanied by increasing complexity of the procedures carried out in the laboratories of VA hospitals and clinics, and a greater demand for their services. The ability of the Laboratory Service to accomplish its mission and objectives depends on the competence of its leadership, the training, skills and productivity of the professional and technical staff, the adequacy of its nonpersonal resources (e.g., space, equipment, supplies), the effectiveness of the utilization of these resources, and the efficiency of the procedures for accomplishment of its responsibilities. In evaluating the Laboratory Service, the ultimate consideration is, of course, the quality and timeliness of the service being rendered to meet the needs of the hospital or outpatient clinic.

21.02 MAJOR ELEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Consideration of the elements of the laboratory program which are identified below will give some assurance of completeness of review and of the application of similar considerations by different observers in their evaluations of laboratory programs at various locations.

- a. Staff and staffing.
- b. Workload.
- c. Equipment; space; supplies.
- d. Laboratory procedures.
- e. Reference laboratories and evaluation studies.
- f. Blood bank.
- g. Animal housing.
- h. Morgue.

21.03 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The areas of inquiry which have been developed for consideration of the laboratory program are not intended to be all inclusive or limiting, but to serve as a framework of evaluation to assist the professional observer. Sound professional judgment is of paramount importance in arriving at valid determinations of program effectiveness and efficiency.

21.04 STAFF AND STAFFING

a. Pathologists. It is the policy of the VA to have a full-time staff pathologists when the demand for service justifies such a requirement, and a person meeting VA standards is available. The number of pathologists required depend on many factors: patient population and type; residency training programs; location of station, etc.

(1) Chief, Laboratory ServiceAreas of Inquiry:

- (a) Training and experience.
- (b) Certification.

- (c) Clinical skills.
 - (d) Leadership: Planning, organization, administration, supervision, judgment, resourcefulness.
 - (e) Acceptance of responsibility.
 - (f) Interprofessional relationships; relationship with laboratory staff.
 - (g) Compliance with policies.
 - (h) Participation in teaching and research.
- (2) Other Professional Medical Staff (Full-Time, Part-Time, Consultants and Attendings)
- Areas of Inquiry:
- (a) Number.
 - (b) Training and experience.
 - (c) Certification.
 - (d) Clinical skills.
 - (e) Interprofessional relationships; relationships with laboratory staff.
 - (f) Participation in teaching and research.
- b. Other Professional Staff (Biochemists, Serologists, Microbiologists, etc.)
- Areas of Inquiry:
- (1) Number.
 - (2) Training and experience.
 - (3) Clinical skills.
 - (4) Acceptance of responsibility; judgment, resourcefulness.
 - (5) Participation in teaching and research.
 - (6) Participation in intra and extra VA training programs.
- c. Technologists and Technicians
- Areas of Inquiry:
- (1) Number.
 - (2) Training and experience.
 - (3) Clinical skills.
 - (4) Participation in intra and extra VA training programs.
- d. Other Laboratory Staff (Helpers, Clerical, etc.)
- Areas of Inquiry:
- (1) Number.
 - (2) Competence.

21.05 WORKLOAD

Areas of Inquiry:

- a. The number of each class of employee is consistent with needs to provide timely service of the highest quality.
- b. Duties performed by the various classes of employees are consistent with their skills and training.
- c. There is a continuous program of inservice training to assure adequate coverage and accomplishment of workload.
- d. Scheduling of employee time is correlated with work scheduling to provide necessary coverage and expeditious accomplishment of laboratory workload.

21.06 EQUIPMENT, SPACE, SUPPLIES

- a. Equipment. Evaluation of equipment should be concerned with availability, condition, location, use and need.

Areas of Inquiry:

- (1) Spectrophotometers; Flame photometers; PBI equipment; Electrophoresis; Hoods (chemistry; bacteriology; transfer); Incubators; Balances; Microprojectors (tissue slides; color slides); Photomicrographic equipment; Autoanalyzers; Coulter Counters; etc.
 - (2) Number, type and condition of equipment is satisfactory to meet the needs for laboratory services.
 - (3) Placement of equipment is conducive to most effective and efficient operation.
 - (4) All available equipment is needed and used effectively and efficiently.
- b. Space (Laboratories and Morgue)

Areas of Inquiry:

- (1) Floors and walls are clean; condition of painted walls is satisfactory; workbenches are clean and orderly.
- (2) Space, including refrigerator space, is adequate for efficient service.
- (3) Most effective use is made of available space.
- (4) Location of the space is satisfactory.

- c. Supplies

Areas of Inquiry:

- (1) Supplies are available in adequate quantity and when needed.
- (2) Supplies are utilized judiciously, with suitable controls to avoid waste.
- (3) There is an adequate library (texts and journals) of general medicine and laboratory subjects.

21.07 LABORATORY PROCEDURES

- a. Professional Level

Areas of Inquiry:

- (1) Pathology.
- (2) Biochemistry and toxicology.
- (3) Microbiology.
- (4) Hematology.
- (5) Serology.
 - (a) Are both cardioplin and C. F. used? Bromelin?
 - (b) Is positive serology checked with State laboratory?
 - (c) How are positive cases reported?
- (6) Blood banks.

b. Technical Level

(1) Pathology

Areas of Inquiry:

- (a) Histopathology.
- (b) Gross pathology (autopsy assistant).

(2) Biochemistry

Areas of Inquiry:

- (a) Blood.
- (b) Spinal fluid.
- (c) Urine.
- (d) Tissue.
- (e) Miscellaneous.
- (f) Reagent and equipment preparation.

(3) Microbiology (Smears, Cultures, Inoculations)

Areas of Inquiry:

- (a) General, including food, milk and other dairy products, water, hospital and canteen dishes, silverware, and cooking utensils.
- (b) Tuberculosis.
- (c) Fungus.
- (d) Viruses.
- (e) Media preparation.
- (f) Equipment (cleaning and preparation).
- (e) Sterilization.

c. Other

Areas of Inquiry:

- (1) Pathology index--name file; diagnosis file.
- (2) Personnel trained for parasitology and cases of food poisoning.
- (3) Use of mechanical glassware washers.
- (4) TB cultures: Lowenstein--Jensen; Petragnani; ATS media.

21.08 REFERENCE LABORATORIES AND EVALUATION STUDIES

a. Autopsies and Surgicals

Areas of Inquiry:

- (1) Material forwarded to AFIP according to instructions.
- (2) Autopsy backlog.

b. Reference Laboratory

Areas of Inquiry:

- (1) Referral of materials.
- (2) Response to evaluation tests.
- (3) Use for training personnel.

c. Central Laboratories

Areas of Inquiry:

- (1) Use of AFIP for surgical diagnoses.
- (2) Referrals to WRAIR.

21.09 BLOOD BANK

Areas of Inquiry:

- a. Usual source of supply: Red Cross, commercial.
- b. Maintenance of emergency donor list.
- c. Equipment and operation of blood bank.
- d. Jewett refrigerator; alarm; immersion thermometer.
- e. Typing check and cross-matching and labeling by two persons.
- f. Source of grouping and typing.
- g. Any transfusion reactions.

21.10 ANIMAL HOUSING

Areas of Inquiry:

- a. Cleanliness.

- b. Washing and sterilization of cages.
- c. Layout.
- d. Source of animals.

21.11 MORGUE

Areas of Inquiry:

- a. Location: Accessibility for moving bodies in and out.
- b. Facilities: Autopsy table; refrigeration (temperature check).
- c. Ventilation: Provision for cooling.
- d. Shower, toilet, lavatory and lockers for male and female.
- e. Embalming room.
- f. Relationship with community morticians.

Department of Medicine and Surgery
Veterans Administration
Washington 25, D. C.

M-6, Part II
Change 3

September 25, 1961

Part II, "Evaluation Criteria," VA Department of Medicine and Surgery Manual M-6, "DM&S Program Evaluation," is changed as indicated below:

NOTE: The purpose of this change is to publish chapter 21, furnishing criteria for evaluation of the Laboratory Service.

chg 5

Pages vii and viii: Remove these pages and insert pages vii and viii attached. (Contents brought up to date.)

Pages 21-1 through 21-6: Insert new pages attached. (Ch. 21 added.)



WILLIAM S. MIDDLETON, M. D.
Chief Medical Director

Distribution:

Same as DM&S Manual M-6, Part II

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REMARKS

I am returning the attached material with the request that we inform facilities requesting copies of VA Manual M6, Part 2, that the manual will not be reprinted and that Health Care Review Service is working on the developing of a consolidated policy statement to replace M6, Part 2, and similar requirements relating to review of facility activities.

Also, facilities requesting copies of M6, Part 2, as a response to Internal Audit recommendations, should inform Internal Audit staff of the developmental activity of Health Care Review Service in regard to review policy.

FROM  JOHN MULHEARN, Chief, Quality Assurance Division, Health Care Review Service (174)	DATE 11-7-77 TEL. EXT. 275-0301
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