



INSTITUTE OF
BIOMEDICAL
SCIENCE

Guidance on the Management of Training in the Clinical Laboratory

www.ibms.org

1. Appointment of a Training Manager

The Institute recommends the appointment of a Training Manager as an individual with responsibility for planning the training needs of all non-medical staff in the department. This will involve planning the training for a variety of levels of requirements, depending upon the level of operation (i.e. within a single discipline, across all pathology disciplines within a single Trust, hospital, Health Board or with overall responsibility within a pathology network). The objective of the Training Manager is to plan programmes for all staff, which meet mandatory, departmental and individual objectives while still enabling the staff to deliver an effective laboratory service.

They may appoint individuals who provide guidance and advice and are the focus for delivering the training strategy and programme for pre and post registration training and assessment within the laboratory.

Management structures will vary according to local preference and need. However, it is expected that the Training Manager will be responsible directly to the Laboratory Manager and ultimately to the Clinical Director. It remains the responsibility of the Laboratory Manager to agree and implement the recommendations of the Training Manager.

The level and scope of responsibilities that fall to a Training Manager make this an extended biomedical scientist role. Where an individual is appointed as Training Manager they can be expected to have qualified to the Higher Specialist level and have a recognised training qualification.

2. Background to Training

Training underpins the delivery of pathology services and whilst not always recognised in an official capacity has long been the domain of experienced practitioners, who have imparted their knowledge and skill to more junior personnel. Clinical Pathology Accreditation (UK) Ltd (CPA) with its nationally recognised set of minimum training standards for pathology laboratories, recognises (Standard B9) that "access to continuing education and training is important for all grades of laboratory staff and participation in Continuing Professional Development schemes is a method of achieving this for relevant staff groups".

Individuals are required to have the appropriate knowledge and skill to deliver a training and education programme (CPA standard B 9.1) in accordance with guidelines from the relevant professional and registration bodies and commensurate with the needs of the service and professional development of staff. Training Managers may have specific responsibilities to perform this function full time or part time (Standard B2.3) and may operate at different levels. Some individuals may have a joint role between a higher education institution and the employer, whilst all biomedical scientists should be involved in training as part of their professional responsibility, or may act as mentors within an education and training programme.

3. Duties, Responsibilities and Authority of a Training Manager

It is recommended that a Training Manager should be appropriately registered and a Fellow of the Institute, (FIBMS) and have a minimum of five years post-registration experience in an Institute approved training laboratory. It is desirable that the Training Manager holds a recognised training qualification such as an Institute Certificate of Extended Practice in Training or equivalent. [Please note: In adherence with NHS Cervical Screening Programme (NHSCSP) guidelines, laboratories delivering a cervical cytology screening service must appoint a dedicated training officer with appropriate cytology screening qualifications, in addition to the Training Manager].

The breadth of responsibilities at which a Training Manager is required to operate is dependent upon the needs of an individual Trust, hospital, Health Board or network and the training activities undertaken in the laboratory which may include scientific, technical and clerical staff. This can range from duties confined to a single pathology discipline undertaken as part of a range of laboratory responsibilities or may cover all pathology disciplines within a Trust or across a pathology network.

The Training Manager will be involved, in collaboration with other members of staff, with the overall management team in the development of a training policy and the accompanying training manual. In co-operation with laboratory management, the Training Manager provides appropriate guidance and advice and is the focus for all issues relating to training within the laboratory. The Training Manager is an integral part of the overall laboratory management team and, within this structure, will oversee implementation, development and co-ordination of training processes and procurement projects within pathology. These include adherence to relevant professional standards and guidelines, and involvement with clinical practice placement issues. They may be supported in the implementation of this by one or more people with responsibility for training.

In laboratories that support a point of care service, the role of the Training Manager may extend to cover these services outside the laboratory, and where appropriate, within the primary care environment.

The Training Manager should be aware of any potential legislation which could impact on the Training Management System.

4. Delegated Responsibility

Training Managers may appoint individuals who provide guidance and advice and are the focus for delivering the training strategy and programme for pre and post registration training and assessment within the laboratory.

It is recommended that these individuals should be HPC registered and a member of the Institute (minimum MIBMS) with at least three years post-registration experience in an Institute approved training laboratory. It is desirable that they hold an Institute recognised training qualification.

Designated trainers support the Training Manager in the development of a training policy and the accompanying training manual. In co-operation with the Training Manager they provide guidance and advice and are the focus for delivering the training strategy and programme for pre-registration training and assessment within the laboratory.

5. Training Standards and Training Policy

In Trusts where there is a single Training Manager across all laboratory disciplines it is important for that individual to be confident of uniformity of understanding and implementation of the laboratory training policy. To this end the Training Manager is advised to form a Training Committee, if one does not already exist. This could be made up of individuals with training responsibility where this role is carried out at a departmental level. In Trusts that have a Training Manager for each discipline within pathology the role of the Training Manager is effective at a more 'local' level and is primarily concerned with issues relating to appropriate laboratory training within the discipline and to assist with wider training issues within pathology. This role is carried out in co-operation with laboratory management.

The Training Policy is a key document that serves as an index to the laboratory training scheme and associated documentation and describes the training management strategy of the laboratory. It is a crucial function of the Training Manager to maintain the training policy and all procedures and records that relate to training.

6. Communications and Liaison

Good communication is the key to training. The Training Manager must, with the laboratory manager, develop a strategy to ensure there are effective mechanisms in place for the dissemination of information within the laboratory and also between the laboratory and laboratory service users. It is essential that the role of the Laboratory Training Manager is recognised outside of pathology and that provision exists for laboratory representation by the Training Manager on appropriate external committees. It is essential that the Training Manager ensures, through co-operation with professional colleagues, that the profile of training in the laboratory is maintained and appropriate to the requirements of the service.

7. Point of Care Testing

Although Point of Care Testing refers to analytical processes performed outside the clinical laboratory it should be monitored and supervised by qualified staff of a local Clinical Pathology Accreditation (CPA) Ltd enrolled pathology laboratory. The Training Manager, in conjunction with the Quality Manager, must have the authority to develop and maintain appropriately trained individuals to enable the implementation of Point of Care Testing, where relevant, and to ensure that all current professional guidelines are implemented within P.O.C.T. systems.

8. Health and Safety

The Training Manager should support the laboratory management team in a co-ordinated approach to the cascade of health and safety policy from Trust to departmental level. The Laboratory Manager is responsible for ensuring that appropriate health and safety

measures are in place, while the health and safety officer, with the laboratory manager, ensure their effective implementation.

9. References

Standards for the Medical Laboratory
Clinical Pathology Accreditation (UK) Ltd

December 2008