

Position Statement

Maintenance of Competence

The Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) is dedicated to ensuring that medical laboratory services are delivered safely and ethically. Although education and certification are necessary components to prepare the novice medical laboratory health care professional for clinical practice, continued competence is essential for maintaining sound practice.

The CSMLS believes that professional status carries with it both rights and responsibilities. Certified laboratory personnel have the right to use a designated professional title and the responsibility to remain competent in that profession. Maintenance of competence is the ongoing ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, judgment, and personal attributes required to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and setting.

Medical laboratory professionals must:

- engage in life-long learning to upgrade their knowledge and skills in order to keep their practice current
- maintain and document competence in their practice of medical laboratory science, and seek out quality educational opportunities for professional growth
- acknowledge limitations in their knowledge, skills, or judgment, and function within those limitations (reflective practice)
- support each other in demonstrating, developing, and maintaining competence
- promote and use self-assessment tools and obtain feedback to determine and improve knowledge, skills, and judgment

Medical laboratory professionals must maintain and enhance competence through continuous learning. Continuous learning requires medical laboratory professionals to assess their competencies in relation to changes occurring in society and the health care environment and, as a result, take action to acquire new competencies.

Maintaining competence through life-long learning and continuous practice is essential to delivering quality medical laboratory services and improving patient safety.

References:

Canadian Nurses Association, Joint Position Statement – Promoting Continuing Competence for Registered Nurses (cited) March 2017

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The College of Veterinarians of Ontario, Presentation on Defining and Measuring Competency (cited June 2014)

National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners, Standard for Maintaining the Competence of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners (cited June 2014)

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