A Roadmap to Establishing A National EQA Program

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NRL

Not-for-profit organisation that exists to support laboratories that perform testing for the diagnosis and management of human infectious disease

WHO Collaborating Centre

Mission

To promote the quality of tests and testing for infectious diseases globally.
2,000+ participants from 75 countries enrolled in NRL EQAS for infectious disease testing
NRL Laboratory Strengthening

- Funded by governments and NGOs
- Primarily in Asian region
- In collaboration and with support of MoH
- Step-wise approach
- Use mentorship and continual monitoring
- Aim for sustainability
Delivery of NRL EQAS Training
EQAS Training

- Engage and gain support from MoH
- Develop agreement
  - Define expectations
- Facility assessment
  - Audit against checklist
  - Perform gap analysis
  - Gauge capacity
  - Conduct primary EQA theory training
EQAS Training

Over subsequent visits perform training in:
- Sample repository
- Reference testing
- Sample homogeneity and stability
- EQAS design
- Standard operating procedures
- Logistics including IATA/UN3373
- Data collection and analysis including software
- Report writing
- Troubleshooting
Guiding Principles for Sustainability

- Highest level MoH support
- Work within countries’ resources
- Facilitate long-term agreement
- Build relationships
- Work is a step-wise manner
- Establish quality systems
- Ultimately, train-the-trainer
Challenges

- Short term contracts
- Access to samples in low endemic regions
- Changes in personnel
- Inappropriate individuals offered for training
- Inadequate resourcing
- Cost
- Unrealistic expectations
- Logistics
- Sample storage facilities
NRL Philosophy on EQA Participation

Top tier laboratories should
- enrol in international programmes
- be the national EQA provider
- use locally sourced samples
- provide training, troubleshooting and guidance
- report issues to regulator

Lower level laboratories should
- Participate in local EQA
- Engage with top tier laboratory
Model for Consideration

- NRL has partnered with Oneworld Accuracy (1WA) since 2005
- Uses 1WA informatics OASYS for logistics, participant management, result collection and analysis and reporting
- 1WA acts as secretariat
- Collaborators have multiple options
EQA Roles

Secretariat
- Provide Informatics
- Procure Samples
- Ship Samples to Members
- Support Members

Member (EQA Provider)
- Provide Leadership
- Make Samples
- Ship Samples to Participants
- Support Participants
Conclusions

- Quality comes at a cost
- EQAS implementation is complex
- Long term approach is required
- Build relationships and mentorship
- MoH involvement and support is preferred
- Ultimately, successful EQA providers can train other regions