MEDICAL LABORATORY Professionals Week

April 24 - April 30, 2016
National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week (April 24-30) is a chance for medical laboratory personnel to celebrate their professionalism and be recognized for their efforts. Since laboratorians often work behind the scenes, few people know much about the critical testing they perform every day. About 7.25 billion laboratory tests are conducted annually in the U.S., according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. As team members of one of the largest industries in the United States, the dedicated efforts of laboratory professionals often go unnoticed by the general public, as well as by the very institutions employing their services. With the public now demanding the assurance of quality healthcare and professional accountability, organizations representing the practitioners of this critical science have a responsibility to ensure that the public is well informed about clinical laboratory competency.

Have you ever wondered who conducts the laboratory testing that your physician orders, such as cholesterol levels or Hemoglobin A1C? Or who performs and analyzes the results of your coagulation tests to monitor your dosage of coumadin? Or who determines what bacteria is associated with your urinary tract infection and what antibiotics could be used to treat it? If you thought that it was your physician or someone else in your doctor’s office, you would be incorrect. These tests are all performed by trained, licensed medical laboratory technologists.

As you know, doctors rely heavily on lab tests to make diagnoses, thus laboratory professionals are critical components of the health care system. Results of laboratory tests often identify the presence of disease in its earliest stages, when the possibilities of a cure are greatest and when treatment is least costly.

This year’s theme, “Laboratory Professionals Get Results” has been chosen to reinforce what people already know about laboratory professionals; they literally “get results”. But the “Get Results” theme also refers to the fact that laboratory professionals make a difference as part of the health care team because they are highly trained professionals doing quality work.

“The Oneida Healthcare Laboratory is an important community resource for patients and physicians and plays a vital role in the success of our organization.” - Karen Puglisi

Laboratory Manager

The Oneida Healthcare Laboratory is accredited by the Joint Commission and holds a clinical laboratory permit with the New York State Department of Health. The laboratory is staffed on-site 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. Our technical/testing staff includes Clinical Laboratory Technologists, Histologists, and Cytologists, all of whom are licensed to practice their profession in NYS. 58% of the licensed technologists in the laboratory have at least 20 years experience and 85% have been performing laboratory testing for at least 10 years. Several technologists have taken postgraduate courses and passed rigorous examinations to obtain Specialist Certification in specific laboratory areas including Hematology and Blood Banking.

Our Laboratory Team also includes Certified Phlebotomists, who are responsible for collecting blood specimens at the Hospital, Extended Care Facility, and our outpatient Draw Stations at Seneca Street (Oneida); North Side Shopping Center (Oneida), Harden Boulevard (Camden), 102 S. Peterboro Street (Canastota) and 201 W. Genesee St (Chittenango). We often hear from our patients how skilled our phlebotomists are! The Laboratory is also supported by skilled clerical staff and three couriers.

At the head of the team are our three Pathologists: Dr. Margaret Nichols, Director of Laboratories; Dr. Rohin Mehta, Chief of Surgical Pathology and Dr. Bella Graber, Chief of Cytopathology.
Please join our Laboratory in celebrating National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week and let them know that their efforts are appreciated!

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APRIL 24-30, 2016 | #LABWEEK

As Americans continue to age, more testing is required more frequently.

The Oneida Healthcare Laboratory performs approximately 1,000,000 in-house tests annually.

Beginning in January 1997, one baby boomer is turning 50 years of age about every 7 seconds.

Almost 15% of the U.S. population is now over 65 years old.

Laboratory test results constitute a significant portion of the patient’s medical records and are vital to the diagnosis and treatment of illness and disease. A 2002 study published in Clinical Leadership and Management Review reported that 94% of the objective medical data in the patient record comes from laboratory professionals.

The over-85 category, which requires the greatest amount of health care services, is also growing rapidly.

Demand for medical laboratory testing is increasing due to: increases in the world population; stronger emphasis on preventive medicine, including early detection and patient responsibility; an explosion of new medical technologies, such as genetic testing.

Expanding medical knowledge and technological developments have increased the need for medical laboratory testing. For example, 35 years ago, few organ transplants were performed. Today, they are becoming routine surgeries in many hospitals. Transplant patients need significant testing before the procedure, must be monitored immediately following, and require some follow up for years after the transplant.

New and different pathogens are contributing to increased needs for laboratory testing. The identification of diseases like AIDS, Lyme disease, and hepatitis C—and the resurgence of old foes like tuberculosis—pose serious threats to the public health.

Unprecedented increases in international travel and immigration are resulting in the importation of rare or previously unknown diseases, especially parasitic infections and inherited disorders, which increases the need for laboratory testing.

Of the 300,000 laboratory professionals working in the U.S. today, 13% are likely to retire in the next 5 years.

12,200 new laboratory professionals will be needed annually to meet the growing need of the world’s population, but only 4,000 to 6,000 graduates will join the workforce each year. In New York State, Clinical Laboratory Technologists must graduate with a Bachelor’s Degree in Medical Technology from an approved program, and then must pass a written examination in order to receive a license to work as a Clinical Laboratory Technologist. Laboratory supervisors are required to have a minimum of six years experience as a technologist before qualifying as a supervisor.
Role of Medical Laboratory Professionals

- 70% of medical decisions are based on laboratory testing results.
- More than 7 billion laboratory tests are conducted annually in the US alone.
- 94% of patient record data comes from laboratory professionals.

Step One:
A patient sample of blood, tissue, or other biological matter is collected and sent to the laboratory.

Step Two:
Highly skilled laboratory professionals perform the requested test.

Step Three:
A pathologist examines specimens and submits the laboratory test results to the ordering clinician.

Step Four:
The clinician and pathologist review the accurate diagnosis and discuss the most appropriate treatment with the patient.

The CAP recognizes and thanks medical laboratory professionals—experts in accuracy.


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