

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION ADAPTS TO CHALLENGES FROM HEALTHCARE REFORM: INNOVATION, ADVOCACY, PARTNERSHIP

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HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

- Increased demand for healthcare services
- Workforce losses and position vacancies
- Diminished support for education programs
- Demands for greater accountability



PROGRAM ACCREDITORS' RESPONSES

- NAACLS' responses to those challenges
 - What is NAACLS?
 - Fostering innovation
 - Promoting advocacy
 - Partnering with other stakeholders

INCREASED DEMAND FOR HEALTHCARE SERVICES

- Influx of new healthcare consumers as healthcare reforms are implemented
- USA's aging demographic
- Scientific and technological advancements expanding diagnostic test menus



WORKFORCE LOSSES AND POSITION VACANCIES

- Average age of medical laboratory professionals is about 50 years of age
- “Wave” of retirements expected over the next decade
- Dearth of practicing laboratory professionals in their 30s
- Economic recession resulted in diminished resources for the education of new professionals
- Increased position vacancies
- Longer time required to fill vacancies

DIMINISHED SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Decreased commitment to teaching
- Staffing shortages
- Short term focus on provision of affordable healthcare
- Decreased capacity to provide internships, preceptorships, other educational experiences



DEMAND FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

- Consumers more actively involved in their care
- Payors raise the bar for claims approvals
- Education institution administrators demand higher enrollments with fewer resources
- Healthcare institution administrators seek every means of lowering costs
- US Department of Education's trend toward federalization
- FDA
- OSHA



NET EFFECT OF CHALLENGES

Acute national and long-term shortage of healthcare professionals across many disciplines.



PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION

- Assure educational quality and consistency in preparation of practitioners.
- Encourage continuous quality improvement in programs.
- Protect and inform the public.



NAACLS MISSION

The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences is committed to being the premier agency for accreditation and approval of educational programs in the Clinical Laboratory Sciences and related healthcare disciplines through the involvement of expert volunteers and dedication to public service.

NAACLS VISION

Medical laboratories will preferentially seek graduates of NAACLS accredited and approved programs to assure quality, value, and innovation for health care consumers.



NAACLS ACCREDITED PROGRAMS

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
MLS	228	229	224	222	227	228
MLT	203	200	205	205	219	216
HT/HTL	29	29	31	33	37	35
Path Asst	7	7	8	8	10	10
CG	5	5	6	5	7	7
DMS	3	4	4	6	7	6
Total	475	474	478	479	507	502

APPROVED PROGRAMS

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Phlebotomy	55	54	55	56	60	62	62
Clinical Assistant	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
Total	57	56	58	59	63	65	65

NAACLS' RESPONSE: FOSTER INNOVATION

- Encourage the design of creative program models that match the institution's mission, community needs, and resources
 - Consortia and other partnership models
 - Schools or healthcare facilities may be program sponsors
 - Traditional or traditional/online hybrids
 - Flexible structuring of clinical experiences

Programs' formats and curricular design are within the purview of the sponsoring institution

NAACLS PROGRAMS GRADUATE NUMBERS

Type	2004 NAACLS Survey		2005 NAACLS Survey		2006 NAACLS Survey		2007 NAACLS Survey		2008 NAACLS Survey		2009 Joint Survey		2010 Joint Survey	
	Grad 2003	Programs 2004	Grad 2004	Programs 2005	Grad 2005	Programs 2006	Grad 2006	Programs 2007	Grad 2007	Programs 2008	Grad 2008	Programs 2009	Grad 2009	Programs 2010
CA	5	2	16	2	27	3	30	3	23	3	22	3	23	3
CG	38	5	36	5	36	5	42	5	44	6	48	6	80	6
MLS/MT	1923	233	1964	232	2141	230	2381	228	2706	226	2922	227	2934	226
MLT	2143	205	2415	203	2500	204	2580	201	2416	202	2515	208	2583	206
DMS	15	2	17	3	28	4	21	4	42	6	42	6	41	6
HT	193	25	200	25	192	28	213	27	287	28	324	33	351	32
HTL	5	2	16	2	17	3	13	3	8	3	24	4	30	3
PATH A	44	6	55	6	67	7	60	7	63	8	73	8	86	9
PHLEB	1175	56	1615	54	1401	54	1263	54	1473	57	1328	57	1485	61
totals	5541	536	6334	532	6409	538	6603	532	7062	539	7298	552	7613	552

NAACLS' RESPONSE: FOSTER INNOVATION

- Moving towards outcomes-based Standards
 - Less emphasis on "inputs"
 - More emphasis on outcomes
 - Will require "cycle of assessment"



Establishes a system of continuous program improvement

NAACLS' RESPONSE: FOSTER INNOVATION

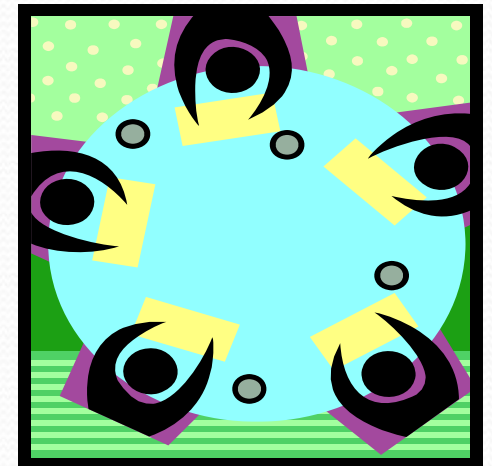
- Regular review of Standards
- Streamlined documentation by clinical affiliates
 - Limit to those elements requiring legal review
 - Other elements may be included in program policies shared with students and public
- Digital correspondence and submission of program documentation
- Sponsor Futures Conferences

NAACLS' RESPONSE: PROMOTE ADVOCACY

- Communicate with decision-makers about the advantages of building and maintaining robust programs
- Encourage program officials to advocate for their programs
 - Consultative services provided by staff and volunteers
 - Mentoring program pairs new and experienced program directors
- Standards require that each program has an Advisory Committee
- Documentation and dissemination of outcomes is critical to institutional and community support for programs

NAACLS' RESPONSE: PARTNERING

- Sponsoring and participating organizations
 - American Society for Clinical Pathology
 - American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science
 - American Association of Pathologists' Assistants
 - National Society of Histotechnology
 - Association of Genetic Technologists



NAACLS RESPONSE: PARTNERING

- Participating member of the Coordinating Council on the Clinical Laboratory Workforce
- With the ASCP and AMA, conduct the Annual Survey of Programs
- Active member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors
 - Regularly interact with over 60 accrediting agencies of programs in many health and other disciplines
 - Accept and follow ASPA's code of ethics for accrediting agencies
 - Keep up to date with accreditation best practices



WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

- Multiple factors challenge the sustainability of the professional healthcare workforce
- National acute and long-term shortage in the workforce across many fields paired with increases in consumers
- NAACLS responding to those challenges through fostering innovation, promoting advocacy, and partnering with other stakeholders

But, we're all in this together...

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Seek solutions within your own fields
- From an education and accreditation perspective
 - Serve on program advisory committee
 - Serve as public members for an accrediting agency
 - Advocate for programs within your communities

Most importantly --- Support and contribute to the education and training of the next generation of healthcare providers however possible!