Government Notice No. 129 of 2022

THE ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS COUNCIL ACT

Regulations made by the Minister, after consultation with the Allied Health Professionals Council, under section 39 of the Allied Health Professionals Council Act

1. These regulations may be cited as the Allied Health Professionals Council (Medical Laboratory Technologist) Regulations 2022.

2. In these regulations –

"Act" means the Allied Health Professionals Council Act.

3. For the purpose of section 5(d) of the Act, the Code of Practice for a medical laboratory technologist shall be the Code set out in the Schedule.

4. Every medical laboratory technologist shall comply with the Code of Practice.

5. (1) Where a medical laboratory technologist fails to comply with the Code of Practice, the Council may, by notice in writing served on him, require him to comply with the Code of Practice.

(2) A medical laboratory technologist who fails to comply with the Code of Practice may be called by the Council to explain his non-compliance with the Code of Practice.

6. These regulations shall come into operation on 1 June 2022.

Made by the Minister, after consultation with the Allied Health Professionals Council, on 16 May 2022.

SCHEDULE

[Regulation 3]

CODE OF PRACTICE

MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGIST

This document sets out the Code of Practice for a medical laboratory technologist. These standards set out safe and effective practice in the field of Biomedical Sciences and are used as a basis for registration. Furthermore, they are considered necessary for the protection of members of the public. The registrant must comply with the code of ethics, the standards of proficiency and for continuing professional development.

It is important that the registrant read and understand the standards of proficiency and the code of ethics. If his/ her practice is called into question, the Allied Health Professionals Council (AHPC) will consider these standards in deciding what action, if any, it has to take. To be able to register with the AHPC, the registrant must meet all the standards of proficiency relevant to his scope of practice.

Our scope of practice is the area or areas of the Biomedical Sciences in which you have the knowledge, skills and experience to practise lawfully, safely and effectively to meet the standards of the AHPC and does not pose any danger to the public or to the registrant. However, it is recognised that a registrant's scope of practice will change over time and that the practice of experienced registrants often becomes more focused and specialised than that of newly registered colleagues. Every time you renew your registration, you will be asked to sign a declaration that you continue to meet the standards of proficiency that apply to your scope of practice. Your particular scope of practice may mean that you are unable to continue to demonstrate that you meet all of the standards that apply for the whole of your profession. If you want to move outside your scope of practice, you

should be certain that you are capable of working lawfully, safely and effectively. For this purpose you must be prepared to undertake the necessary training or gain enough experience in order to move into the new area of practice.

Although it is important that you meet the standards of the AHPC, there is more than one way in which each standard can be met, as the way in which you meet these standards might change over time due to improvements in technology or changes in your practice. To ensure that you meet the standards that apply to you, you may seek advice and support from education providers, employers, colleagues, professional bodies, unions and others so that the wellbeing of service users is safeguarded at all times.

In this document, the generic standards which apply to all our registrants are written in bold whereas the profession specific standards are written in plain text. The standards are numbered for easy reference but are not hierarchical as they are all equally important for practice. In this document we use phrases such as 'understand', 'know', and 'be able to'. This is so that the standards remain applicable to current registrants in maintaining their fitness to practice, as well as prospective registrants who have not yet started practising and are applying for registration for the first time. Please note that the standards of the AHPC will be under continual review and changes will be made in the future to take into account changes in practice. The AHPC will ensure that any changes to the standards will be publicised and other professional bodies will be informed.

Definition: A Medical Laboratory Technologist

A professional who facilitates the diagnosis of diseases, as well as the implementation and monitoring of therapies to treat disease. A medical laboratory technologist is responsible for examining and analysing blood, body fluids, tissues and cells in an effort to help

clinicians to determine the underlying cause of an illness, the stage of the disease or the effectiveness of therapy.

PART I – GLOSSARY

1. Interpretation

"accuracy" means the degree to which the result of a measurement or calculation or specification conforms to the correct value or a standard;

"audit in the laboratory" means Laboratory-based clinical audits that are –

(a) concerned primarily with the everyday aspects of laboratory services; and

(b) a means of providing feedback to the users of the lab and its staff. They involve measuring the performance of laboratory services against established standards;

"autonomous professional" means a professional who has the authority to make decisions and the freedom to act in accordance with one's professional knowledge base;

"beneficence " means doing good for the patient under all circumstances;

"biological hazard" means a process or phenomenon of organic origin or conveyed by biological vectors, including exposure to pathogenic microorganisms, toxins and bioactive substances that may cause loss of life, injury, illness or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption or environmental damage;

"calibration" means the act of evaluating and adjusting the precision and accuracy of measurement equipment;

"care, treatment or other services" means the different work that our registrants carry out;

"colleague" means other health and care professionals, students and trainees, support workers, professional carers and others involved in providing care, treatment or other services to service users;

"communication" is a process by which information is exchanged by language, signs and symbols, including receiving and producing messages and using communication devices and techniques;

"conduct" means a health and care professional's behavior;

"confidentiality" means keeping a client's information between you and the client and not telling others including co-workers, friends, family;

"conflict of interest" means a situation where one's personal or private interests interfere with another's best interests or one's own professional responsibilities;

"consent" means the permission for a registrant to provide care, treatment or other services, given by a service user, or someone acting on his behalf after receiving all the information he reasonably requires to make that decision;

"dysfunction" means the disturbance or abnormality of function. Dysfunction may be expressed at the level of the body (impairment), the person (activity limitation) or in the ability of a person to undertake their usual social roles (participation restriction);

"ethics" means the values that guide a person's behavior or judgement;

"evidence-based practice" means the evaluation and use of laboratory tests with an object of improving a patient outcome;

"hazard" means a dangerous phenomenon, substance, human activity or condition that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption or environmental damage;

"health" means a state of complete physical, social and mental well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity;

"information governance" helps manage and control information by supporting the organisation's activities and ensuring compliance with its duties. Healthcare organisations must earn the confidence of patients and society, through a firm commitment to ethical and responsible handling of personal information;

"multidisciplinary" means one or more discipline working collaboratively. It includes several professionals in the team where the various interventions are provided in isolation and the professions co-exist. This approach recognises the importance of different disciplines and involves professionals operating within the boundaries of their profession towards discipline-specific goals while recognising the important contribution from other disciplines;

"non-discriminatory practice" means a professional practice within which an individual, a team and an organisation actively seek to ensure that no one, including a patient/client, carer, colleague, or student, is directly or indirectly, treated less favorably than others are, or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances, on the ground of age, color, creed, criminal convictions, culture, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, medical condition, mental health,

nationality, physical appearance, political beliefs, race, religion, responsibility for dependants, sexual identity, sexual orientation or social class;

"non-maleficence" means doing no harm to others;

"personal integrity" means the quality of being honest with yourself and others and living a life that is aligned with strong moral principle;

"privacy" means, as distinct from confidentiality, the right of the individual client or patient to be let alone and to make decisions about how personal information is shared;

"practitioner" means a health and care professional who is currently practising in his profession;

"precision" means the closeness of 2 or more measurements to each other;

"record "means an account that contains information, in any media, intended to document actions, events or facts. Records may be defined as information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, pursuant to legal obligations or in the transaction of business;

"scope of practice means the areas in which a registrant has the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to practice safely and effectively;

"service user" means anyone who uses or is affected by the services of registrants, for example, patients or clients.

PART II – CODE OF ETHICS

The code of ethics was developed by the AHPC to set the standards of conduct and behavior expected of registered allied health

professionals. The code was developed based on the ethical principles of –

(a) beneficence;

(b) non-maleficence;

(c) respect of patient's privacy and confidentiality;

(d) respect of patient's autonomy;

(e) fair and just provision of health services; and

(f) personal integrity.

1. As a registered professional, you must, at all times, promote and protect the health and safety of your patients. You must be familiar with and adhere to the code at all times. Adherence to the code will not only protect your patient and the public but also protect you from allegations or complaints made against you.

2. The code of ethics, along with the standards of proficiency, defines the professionalism in the practice of Biomedical Science. Medical laboratory technologists adhere not only to the guidelines, but also to the underlying spirit and precepts. The code will –

(a) promote the medical laboratory technologist recognition of the professional and personal conduct expectations for Biomedical Science practice;

(b) represent the minimum standards of professional behavior and ethical conduct expected of all medical laboratory technologist; and

(c) apply to the medical laboratory technologist in all dimensions of professional and personal conduct, including technical and nontechnical fields such as education, administration, quality assurance and research.

3. Ethical obligations

Medical laboratory technologists demonstrate an application of their ethical obligations through their professional and personal conduct.

4. Obligations to society

Medical laboratory technologists shall –

(a) as practitioners of an autonomous profession have the responsibility to contribute from their sphere of professional competence to the general well being of society;

(b) apply their expertise to improve patient healthcare outcomes by eliminating barriers to access to laboratory services and promote equitable distribution of healthcare resources;

(c) perform biomedical research to improve and develop public health in general;

(d) be responsible for establishing new standards and develop existing standards for improved laboratory practice and patient safety; and

(e) comply with relevant laws and regulations pertaining to the practice of Biomedical Science and actively seek to change these laws and regulations that do not meet the high standards of care and practice.

5. Obligations to the patient or client

A medical laboratory technologist shall –

(a) put his patient's interest above his personal interest;

(b) respect his patient's individual needs and overall welfare at all times, including the patient's right to freedom of choice in health care provider, free and enlightened consent and

an expectation of confidentiality of all patient information and results of laboratory analysis;

(c) be responsible for the logical process from the acquisition of the specimen to the production of data and the final report of the test result;

(d) be accountable for the quality and integrity of biomedical laboratory services;

(e) exercise professional judgement, skill and care while meeting international standards;

(f) implement scientific advances that benefit the patient/client and improve the delivery of results of laboratory analyses;

(g) work with all patient samples without regard to disease state, ethnicity, race, religion or sexual orientation; and

(h) prevent and avoid conflicts of interest that undermine the best interests of patients.

6. Obligations to colleagues, the profession and other members of health team

A medical laboratory technologist shall –

(a) uphold and maintain the dignity and respect of the profession and maintain a reputation of honesty, integrity, competence and reliability;

(b) contribute to the advancement of the profession by improving the body of knowledge, adopting scientific advances that benefit patient, maintain high standards of practice and education;

(c) continuously improve professional skills and knowledge;

(d) accept the responsibility to establish the qualifications for

entry to the profession, implement these qualifications through licensing and uphold those qualifications in hiring practices;

(e) actively seek to establish cooperative and harmonious working relationships with other health professionals;

(f) provide expertise and advise, teach and counsel students, colleagues and other health professionals;

(g) facilitate awareness and understanding of the Biomedical Science professions; and

(h) be loyal to the policies, laws and legislations which apply to the workplace, as long as they do not conflict with the professional ethical guidelines.

PART III – STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY

A registrant medical laboratory technologist must –

1. be able to practice safely and effectively within his scope of practice;

1.1 know the limits of his practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional;

1.2 recognise the need to manage his own workload and resources effectively;

2. be able to practice within the legal and ethical boundaries of his profession;

2.1 understand the need to act, at all times, in the best interests of service users;

2.2 understand what is required of them by the AHPC;

2.3 understand the need to respect and uphold the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of service users, including

his role in the diagnostic and therapeutic process and in maintaining health and wellbeing;

2.4 recognise that relationships with service users should be based on mutual respect and trust and maintain high standards of care even in situations of personal incompatibility;

2.5 know about current legislation applicable to the work of his profession;

2.6 be aware of the international standards that govern and affect pathology laboratory practice;

2.7 understand the importance of and be able to obtain informed consent;

2.8 exercise a professional duty of care;

3.0 Maintain fitness to practice;

3.1 understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct;

3.2 understand the importance of maintaining their own health;

3.3 understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career-long learning;

4.0 Practise as an autonomous professional, exercising his own professional judgement;

4.1 assess a professional situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem;

4.2 make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease the use of techniques or procedures and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately;

4.3 be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative;

4.4 recognise that he is personally responsible for and must be able to justify his decisions;

4.5 make and receive appropriate referrals;

4.6 understand the importance of participation in training, supervision and mentoring;

5.0 be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice;

5.1 understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different groups and individuals;

5.2 recognise own beliefs, values and prejudices and the impact these may have on patients or clients and colleagues;

5.3 recognise and respond to the values, beliefs and cultural practices of patients or clients when collecting, handling, storing or disposing of body fluids, tissue samples and related patients or client information;

6.0 Practise in a non-discriminatory manner;

7.0 understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality;

7.1 be aware of the limits of the concept of confidentiality;

7.2 understand the principles of information governance and be aware of safe and effective use of health information;

7.3 recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users or the wider public;

8.0 Communicate effectively with patients/clients, colleagues, other health professionals and the public;

8.1 demonstrate effective and appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to service users, colleagues and others;

8.2 ensure that communication is clear, concise and accurate;

8.3 understand how the means of communication should be modified to address and take into account factors such as age, capacity, learning ability and physical ability;

8.4 communicate the outcomes of biomedical procedures;

8.5 select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users and others;

8.6 be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non- verbal communication and how this can be affected by factors such as age, culture, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and spiritual or religious beliefs;

8.7 understand the need to provide service users or people acting on their behalf with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions;

8.8 recognise the need to use interpersonal skills to encourage the active participation of service users;

9.0 Work appropriately with others

9.1 work where appropriate, in partnership with service users, other professionals, support staff and others;

9.2 understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team;

9.3 contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi- disciplinary team;

9.4 be aware of the impact of pathology services on the patient care pathway;

10.0 maintain records appropriately;

10.1 keep accurate, comprehensive and comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines;

10.2 recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines;

10.3 recognise, communicate and understand the risks and possible serious consequences of errors and omissions in the requests for, and results of, laboratory investigations;

10.4 use systems for the accurate and correct identification of patients and laboratory specimens;

10.5 understand the need to adhere to protocols of specimen identification, including bar coding;

10.6 understand the importance of backup storage of electronic data

11.0 reflect on and review practice;

11.1 understand the value of reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection;

11.2 recognise the value of case conferences and other methods of review;

12.0 assure the quality of their practice;

12.1 engage in evidence-based practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures;

12.2 gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data, that helps to evaluate the responses of service users to their care;

12.3 be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures;

12.4 maintain an effective audit trail and work towards continual improvement;

12.5 be aware of, and be able to participate in quality assurance programmes, where appropriate;

12.6 evaluate intervention plans using recognized outcome measures and revise the plans as necessary in conjunction with the service user;

12.7 recognise the need to monitor and evaluate the quality of practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for quality assurance and improvement programmes;

12.8 select and apply quality and process control measures;

12.9 identify and respond appropriately to abnormal outcomes from quality indicators;

13.0 understand the key concepts of the knowledge base relevant to profession;

13.1 understand the structure and function of the human body, together with knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction relevant to our profession;

13.2 recognise the role of other professions in health and social care;

13.3 understand the structure and function of health services in Mauritius;

13.4 understand the concept of leadership and its application to practice;

13.5 demonstrate knowledge of the underpinning scientific principles of investigations provided by clinical laboratory services;

13.6 understand the role of the following specializations in the diagnosis, treatment and management of disease: Cellular Science (Histopathology and Cytology), Blood Science (Biochemistry, Serology, Haematology and Transfusion Science), Infection Science (Bacteriology, Virology and Parasitology), Molecular and Genetic, Science and reproductive Science;

13.7 evaluate analyses using qualitative and quantitative methods to aid the diagnosis, screening and monitoring of health and disorders;

13.8 understand the techniques and associated instrumentation used in the practice of biomedical science;

13.9 understand the biological hazard groups and associated containment levels;

14.0 draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice;

14.1 change their practice as needed to take account of new development or changing context;

14.2 perform and supervise procedures in clinical laboratory investigations to reproducible standards;

14.3 operate and utilize specialist equipment according to their discipline;

14.4 validate scientific and technical data and observations according to pre-determined quality standards;

14.5 demonstrate proficiency in liquid handling methodologies, including preparation of standard solutions and buffers;

14.6 demonstrate proficiency in practical skills in cellular science, infection science, molecular and genetic science and reproductive science, where appropriate to the discipline;

14.7 demonstrate practical skills in the processing and analysis of specimens including specimen identification, the effect of storage on specimens and the safe retrieval of specimens;

14.8 demonstrate practical skills in the investigation of disease processes;

14.9 work in conformance with standard operating procedures and conditions;

14.10 work with accuracy and precision;

14.11 prepare reagents accurately and consistently;

14.12 perform calibration and quality control checks;

14.13 demonstrate operational management of laboratory equipment to check that equipment is functioning within its specifications and to respond appropriately to abnormalities;

14.14 understand the implications of non-analytical errors;

14.15 select suitable specimens and procedures relevant to patient's clinical needs, including collection and preparation of specimens as and when appropriate;

14.16 select and use appropriate assessment techniques;

14.17 undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment;

14.18 be aware of the need to assess and evaluate new procedures prior to routine use;

14.19 undertake or arrange investigations as appropriate;

14.20 analyse and critically evaluate the information collected;

14.21 investigate and monitor disease processes and normal states;

14.22 use standard operating procedures for analyses;

14.23 use statistical packages and present data in appropriate format;

14.24 demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving;

14.25 use research, reasoning and problem solving skills to determine appropriate actions;

14.26 recognise the value of research to the critical evaluation of practice;

14.27 be aware of a range of research methodologies;

14.28 evaluate research and other evidence to inform their own practice;

14.29 design experiments, report, interpret and present data using scientific convention, including application of SI units and other units used in biomedical science;

14.30 use information and communication technologies appropriate to their practice;

15.0 understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment;

15.1 understand the need to ensure personal, patient/client, colleague and public safety;

15.2 be aware of applicable health and safety legislation, and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these safety policies and procedures;

15.3 work safely, including being able to select appropriate hazard control and risk management reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner and in accordance with health and safety legislation;

15.4 select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly;

15.5 establish safe environments for practice, which minimize risks to service users and others, including the use of hazard control and particularly infection control;

15.6 understand the application of principles of good laboratory practice;

15.7 handle, store, transport and dispose of hazardous chemicals and biological material appropriately;

15.8 understand and apply the regulations for preservation and safe shipment of biological specimens.
