

Mentoring Session
August 23, 2007
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Introduction

John Gumper

John Gumper provided introductory remarks and facilitated the session. The AB fee structure was moved to the TAC Committee meeting. The information provided during the session is presented for informational purposes by the TAC. The information presented does not necessarily reflect TNI's position and should not be considered authoritative.

Assessment Deficiencies:

Betsy Kent

Part I: Corrective Actions and Implementing Corrective Actions

Part II: Preventing Repeat Deficiencies

The presentation and the handout will be available on the TNI web site.

TNI Mentoring Plan

James Broderick
Ray Federici
Kristen Russell

The presentation and the handout will be available on the TNI web site. A proposed mentoring plan developed by the working group (James Broderick, Ray Frederici, and Kristen Russell) was presented for discussion and comment.

Discussion Comments:

- Outreach to make information about the program and get labs (specifically small labs) aware and involved in the program
- Communication is the key
 - On the website
 - What is the easiest way to become accredited?
 - How can we help you?
- Make sure you clarify/specify when on-site visits
- Make sure the templates are available on the website
- Will this be a problem for consultants?
- Is there a less formal mechanism available to answer/discuss basic questions?
- There are two goals: accreditation and improving quality
- Could mentor a laboratory in responding to its findings
- A mentor may not be able to answer all the questions but could help finding resources to answer questions (e.g., provide assistance with navigating the system)
- Could provide a reality check
- Provide a instant "network" for new individuals
- Do we need to provide incentives for mentors (recognition, T-shirts, money.)
- Provide a mentor ribbon

- This is a peer program – ABs may mentor ABs, labs may mentor labs
- Why are labs not going to their own states to get advice? They are paying for the service and should be going to their own ABs for information/advice. ABs might not be able to tell a lab what to do to address a standard.
- The website should be retooled to have a section on “where do I start?”
- Outside of the mentoring program, there should be a flow chart on the road to accreditation.
- This is just one more tool to provide assistance

Submitted comments:

- Address small lab issues
- Identify areas within the standard that creates confusion/different opinions
- Root cause analysis of why we are stuck with only 13 states as NELAP states
- In mentoring, the mentor must be capable. Confidence is needed when you ask your mentor a question.
- The plan is a great idea. Incentives and support for mentors and mentees will need to be ironed out.
- Reserve a block of time for open questions that don't have to be associated with a particular presentation so that folks can ask questions on topics they would like suggestions/guidance on.
- AB volunteers need to know questions to know if they want to volunteer. Can't mentor on a subject if you don't feel you know the answers.
- Set up a link to the guidelines that are out there available on “how tos”
- Outreach to one and two person laboratories. Find ways to contact them and educate them on quality systems.
- This is a great session. Got lots of information.
- Provide a “roadmap” to starting the process to becoming a NELAP accredited laboratory. Just a very brief outline would be helpful.