

Minutes, PT Frequency Subcommittee

DATE: June 6, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. EDT

Subcommittee members in attendance (4): D Tholen (chair), M Karapondo, G. Dechant, J Morgan

Guest, ex officio: K McCracken: Chairman PT Committee

Associate member: S Kassner (for Jeff Lowry)

Subcommittee members absent (4): R Kirimi, C Wibby, J Lowry, R Haynes

Dan Tholen opened the meeting and thanked the members for their time.

Three documents had been distributed prior to the meeting:

- Draft minutes from May 23 teleconference, including an Annex with study proposals.
 - A spreadsheet listing responses to a survey of representatives from State Accrediting Bodies about PT issues, conducted in 2007 by Judy Morgan.
 - A proposed agenda (distributed by e-mail, Annex 1).
1. Dan noted that we do not have a quorum of members (5 or more needed) so even though we could not make formal decisions, we could have discussions and move projects along. Dan noted that he had originally (and incorrectly) scheduled the conference call for an hour earlier, but a revision announcement had gone out on June 5.
 2. There were no changes to the proposed agenda. Kirstin informed the subcommittee that the teleconference needed to be published on the TNI website, and that she had submitted the schedule to TNI. It was noted that what she submitted was for weekly calls, and calls would be bi-weekly. She agreed to submit a revised schedule, with July 4 skipped and replaced by July 11 and every 2 weeks thereafter.
 3. The minutes of the May 23 meeting were discussed. Kirstin proposed a revision to the description of item 5 from that meeting, concerning subcommittee membership. Dan read Kirstin's proposal and there was agreement that the change was appropriate, and accurately reflected the discussion. Dan also noted a question from Jeff Flowers concerning analytes to use in the study of New Jersey data. The group agreed that no changes to the minutes were needed, since the actual study design would be reviewed prior to analysis, so Jeff's concern could be resolved at that time.

The members present agreed that the minutes were acceptable as revised, but the other subcommittee members need to be given an opportunity to vote on approval. Dan will circulate the revised minutes for approval.

4. The proposed study of data from New Jersey was discussed. Jeff Lowry was not present, but Shawn Kassner informed the group that the necessary data has been

extracted from the ERA database, and the listing of analyte frequency will start next week. Jeff Lowry will communicate with Dan next week and they will agree on listings of analytes and numbers of labs to send to the subcommittee for review and approval before further analyses of performance are conducted. The preliminary design was approved unchanged from the last report, and is presented in Annex 2, I.

5. The group discussed the results of the Survey of State ABs conducted in 2007 by Judy Morgan. Dan had prepared a brief summary of responses on frequency of PT and opinions of the effectiveness of the States' PT policies. Judy stated that no other summaries have been prepared or presented in other reports.

The group agreed that the information was useful, and came very close to what the subcommittee needed to know, and that there was little or no need to resurvey the ABs on these questions, except where perhaps some ABs had not understood the questions. Judy offered to conduct telephone interviews with the 20+ States that did not respond, and of those who responded incompletely. Dan offered to provide recommendations for rewording key questions and eliminating those questions that are not directly related to the subcommittee charter. The subcommittee agreed that responses will be released in summarized form only, with no indication of person or State. They also agreed that Judy may inform the respondents that the responses will be used by the subcommittee as part of their gathering of information for the TNI PT Expert Committee.

6. The subcommittee discussed the proposed survey of questions for the PT providers. There was consensus that the survey may be premature since the use of the data was not clear, and we may wish to ask further information later. There was also agreement that since there are few PT providers, there was little risk in asking the proposed questions (Annex 2 II), and either halting the survey or suggesting revised questions if the current questions prove inadequate. Dan will conduct this Survey and report back to the subcommittee.

This discussion led to the concern that we should ask laboratories about related issues concerning PT frequency as an impediment to participation in NELAC. Judy informed the group that she is conducting a closely related survey of laboratories in ACIL, and that she could add questions to that survey. While her proposed study was of NELAP accredited laboratories, the study can be extended to non-NELAP laboratories also. While the results of the study will not be available before the TNI/NEMC conference in August, that conference will be an ideal opportunity to promote the study.

7. Assignments:
 - a. Jeff L. will extract data and summarize the analytes available for a study comparing performance, and will discuss it with Dan before submitting the list to the subcommittee prior to the next meeting.
 - b. Judy will survey States that did not respond to her previous survey, and resolve unclear responses from States that did respond. Dan will suggest

changes to some questions. Judy will also add questions to her survey of ACIL members concerning PT frequency and laboratories' likelihood of seeking accreditation to NELAC standards

- c. Dan will interview approved PT providers concerning separate client requirements for PT.

8. There was no Other Business
9. Next call June 20, 1:00pm EDT
10. Call adjourned at 2:10pm EDT

ANNEX 1

Agenda, PT Frequency Subcommittee June 6, 2008 1:00 EDT

1. Greetings, roll call
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of minutes for call 2 (5/23/08)
4. Status of study of NJ data (Lowry)
5. Review of survey of state ABs from (Morgan):
 - a. Summary data from survey
 - i. 16 states at 1/year; 12 states 2/year; 2 states allow both
 - ii. Of 16 states at 1/year:
 1. 11 say effective (3 no answer on effective)
 2. 2 say they would like more PT
 - iii. Of 12 states at 2/year:
 1. 9 say effective (2 no answer on effective)
 2. None say prefer 1/year
 - iv. Of 2 states that administer both:
 1. 1 says effective
 2. 1 would prefer 1/year
 - b. Need for other summary?
 - c. Need to ask more states, or clarify responses?
 - d. Need different questions?
6. Review of questions for PT providers
7. Volunteers for assignments and deadlines
 - a. NJ data: Lowry and Tholen
 - b. State AB Survey: Morgan? Other?
 - c. PT providers: Tholen? Other?
 - d. Other?
8. Other business
9. Next meeting, June 20, 1:00 EDT
10. Adjourn

ANNEX 2
Proposed Study designs

I. Design for study of labs w/ requirement for 1 vs. requirement for 2 events per year for all analytes.

1. NJ labs only. Most recent 3 years of data.
2. List of labs with requirements for 1 event per year vs. requirements for 2 events per year for all NELAC analytes.
3. List analytes according to number of labs in the smaller group (probably the group of laboratories where 2 events are required), by year, listing the number of labs that returned results for the analyte sometime each year.
4. Choose the analytes to study (to be agreed by subcommittee)
5. List percentage of unacceptable results by analyte, class, and overall for labs in each group.
6. List frequency of labs with repeated unacceptable results for an analyte (most recent 3 years).
7. Calculate average absolute z score (note, $z > 5$ are made $z = 5$) by analyte, class, overall.
8. Select laboratories in the 1/year group that participated in PT 2 or more times for an analyte.
9. Calculate percentage unacceptable and average z score for this subset.

Examine outcome statistics in the two groups (PT mandated 1/year vs. 2/year), by analyte, by chemical class, overall for each program, and overall.

- Percentage unacceptable
- Average absolute z score
- Percentage repeated unacceptable

Examine also the above scores for the subset of 1/year labs who take PT 2+ /year

II. Poll PT Providers

For programs that are mandated by clients other than states and are repeated more than once, please give the approximate numbers of programs that are in each of the cells for number of events per year and number of samples per event. For example: the PT programs of CAEAL (Canada) are 4 samples, two times a year.

Frequency	1 sample	2 samples	3+ samples	Total
≤1 per year				
2 per year				
≥3 per year				
Total				

- a. Approximately how many laboratories are included in each of the client programs?

b. Is the program an exclusive arrangement with your PT organization, or shared with others? If shared, please give the name of the client or specified program.

c. Are there states or clients with different monitoring procedures that might be of interest to the subcommittee?