This document provides guidance based on risk management for laboratories to develop quality control plans tailored to the particular combination of measuring system, laboratory setting, and clinical application of the test.

A guideline for global application developed through the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute consensus process.
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For additional information on committee participation or to submit comments, contact CLSI.

Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute
950 West Valley Road, Suite 2500
Wayne, PA 19087 USA
P: +1.610.688.0100
F: +1.610.688.0700
www.clsi.org
standard@clsi.org
Abstract

Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute document EP23-A—Laboratory Quality Control Based on Risk Management; Approved Guideline provides guidance to laboratories on the development of quality control plans for measuring systems. Regulatory requirements, information provided by the manufacturer, information pertaining to the laboratory environment, and medical requirements for the test results are evaluated, using risk management principles, to develop a quality control plan tailored to the particular combination of measuring system, laboratory environment, and clinical application. The effectiveness of the laboratory quality control plan is monitored to detect trends, identify corrective actions, and provide continuous quality improvement. The advantages and limitations of various quality control processes are considered.

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Committee Membership

Consensus Committee on Evaluation Protocols

Greg Cooper, CLS, MHA
Chairholder
W. Gregory Cooper LLC
Denton, Texas, USA

James F. Pierson-Perry
Vice-Chairholder
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics
Newark, Delaware, USA

John Rex Astles, PhD, FACB,
DABCC
Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention
Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Jeffrey R. Budd, PhD
Beckman Coulter, Inc.
Chaska, Minnesota, USA

Jonathan Guy Middle, PhD
University Hospital Birmingham
NHS Trust
Birmingham, United Kingdom

Mitchell G. Scott, PhD
Barnes-Jewish Hospital, Washington
University School of Medicine
St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Lakshmi Vishnuvajjala, PhD
FDA Center for Devices and
Radiological Health
Rockville, Maryland, USA

Document Development Committee on Laboratory Quality Control Based on Risk Management

James H. Nichols, PhD, DABCC, FACB
Chairholder
Baystate Medical Center
Springfield, Massachusetts, USA

Greg Cooper, CLS, MHA
W. Gregory Cooper LLC
Denton, Texas, USA

Devery Howerton, PhD
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Ellis Jacobs, PhD, DABCC, FACB
New York City Health & Hospital Corporation
New York, New York, USA

W. Gregory Miller, PhD
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia, USA

Valerie L. Ng, PhD, MD
Alameda County Medical Center/
Highland General Hospital
Oakland, California, USA

Nils B. Person, PhD, FACB
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics
Flanders, New Jersey, USA

Arleen Pinkos, BS, MT(ASCP)
FDA Center for Devices and Radiological Health
Silver Spring, Maryland, USA

Ann E. Snyder, MT(ASCP)
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Marcia L. Zucker, PhD
Consultant
Metuchen, New Jersey, USA

Mitchell G. Scott, PhD
Barnes-Jewish Hospital, Washington
University School of Medicine
St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Lakshmi Vishnuvajjala, PhD
FDA Center for Devices and
Radiological Health
Rockville, Maryland, USA

Staff

Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute
Wayne, Pennsylvania, USA

Luann Ochs, MS
Vice President,
Standards Development

Ron S. Quicho
Staff Liaison

Megan P. Larrisey, MA
Assistant Editor
Acknowledgment

CLSI and the Document Development Committee on Laboratory Quality Control Based on Risk Management gratefully acknowledge the following individuals for their contributions during the development of this document:

Sousan S. Altaie, PhD
FDA Center for Devices and Radiological Health
Rockville, Maryland, USA

Zoe Brooks
Harmonized Quality
Worthington, Ontario, Canada

Mary F. Burritt, PhD
Mayo Clinic
Scottsdale, Arizona, USA

William J. Castellani, MD
Penn State Hershey Medical Center
Hershey, Pennsylvania, USA

Jeff Dahlen, PhD
Accumetrics
San Diego, California, USA

Christine Diehl
Burns, Tennessee, USA

Valerio Genta, MD
Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital
Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA

Paul Glavina
Abbott Point of Care
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Anita V. Glombik
Bio-Rad Laboratories GmbH
Munich, Germany

Abdel-Basit Halim, PharmD, PhD, DABCC
Daiichi Sankyo Pharma Development
Edison, New Jersey, USA

Aristides T. Hatjimihail, MD, PhD
Hellenic Complex Systems Laboratory
Drama, Greece

Richard W. Jenny, PhD
New York State Department of Health
Albany, New York, USA

Francisca L. Lehr, MS, MT(ASCP)
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Seattle, Washington, USA

Ronald Leneau, MS, MT(ASCP)
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Jacob (Jack) B. Levine, MBA
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics
Tarrytown, New York, USA

John J. Murphy, MHS
State of Connecticut Department of Public Health
Hartford, Connecticut, USA

Robert Murray, JD, PhD
Advocate Healthcare Lutheran General Park Ridge, Illinois, USA

Curtis A. Parvin, PhD
Bio-Rad Laboratories
Plano, Texas, USA

Donald M. Powers, PhD
Powers Consulting Services
Rochester, New York, USA

Wadid Sadek, PhD
Waynesboro, Virginia, USA

Mitchell G. Scott, PhD
Washington University School of Medicine
St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Liz Walsh, CLS, NCA
Instrumentation Laboratory
Lexington, Massachusetts, USA

Gitte Wennecke
Radiometer Medical ApS
Bronshoj, Denmark

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Although the manufacturer is responsible for quality in design of its measuring system and reagents, the laboratory and, ultimately, the laboratory director are accountable for the quality of test results. To establish effective quality control (QC), laboratories should process an array of information (regulatory requirements, manufacturer-provided information, the laboratory’s environment, and the medical applications of tests performed) through a risk assessment process.

This process identifies potential weaknesses in the measuring system and environment that are weighed against the probability for error, the effectiveness of control processes built into the measuring system, and the laboratory’s assessment of risk in consideration of the clinical use of a laboratory result. This document provides guidance to laboratories for establishing a quality control plan (QCP). Once developed, the QCP is monitored for effectiveness and modified as unanticipated failure modes or underestimated risks of error are discovered or as particular control procedures are no longer required once sufficient objective data demonstrating reliable performance have been established. The advantages and limitations of a variety of QC measures are discussed to help the laboratory develop a QCP that is appropriate for its particular measuring system, laboratory, and clinical environment.

Compliance with EP23 may not satisfy the requirements of all regulatory, accreditation, or certification bodies. Laboratories need to comply with all applicable requirements in the development of their QCPs.
Chapter 1
Introduction

In this document, you will learn how to create a quality control plan (QCP) that is customized for your institution, facility, and laboratory, so that you can run your tests in an effective and efficient manner, improving patient care.

You will learn:

- How to compile information into a QCP
- The many types of tools in the QC toolbox, and which are most effective for your situation
- How to detect potential errors
- How to determine if potential errors can cause harm
- How to help prevent errors from occurring
- How to ensure your QCP is effective

This is a preview of "CLSI EP23-A". Click here to purchase the full version from the ANSI store.
Laboratory Quality Control Based on Risk Management; Approved Guideline

1 Scope

This document describes good laboratory practice for developing and maintaining a QCP for medical laboratory testing using internationally recognized risk management principles. An individual QCP should be established, maintained, and modified as needed for each measuring system. The QCP is based on the performance required for the intended medical application of the test results. Risk mitigation information obtained from the manufacturer and identified by the laboratory, applicable regulatory and accreditation requirements, and the individual health care and laboratory setting are considered in development of the QCP. This document is intended to guide laboratories in determining QC procedures that are both appropriate and effective for the test being performed.

This document may not satisfy the requirements of all regulatory, accreditation, or certification bodies. Laboratories need to comply with all applicable requirements in the development of their QCPs.

2 Introduction

2.1 Quality Control Plan

Health care providers need test results that are relevant, accurate, and reliable for patient care. A number of factors can adversely affect the quality of test results and present a risk of harm to the patient, from failures of the measuring system, to operator errors, to environmental conditions. Failure is used in this document in the context of risk management and means, in the broadest sense, a case when the system does not meet the user’s expectation. Failure includes the inability of a measurement process to perform its intended functions satisfactorily or within specified performance limits, errors of a measuring system that may produce an incorrect result, and incorrect use of a measuring system that may cause an incorrect result. Risk management is the systematic application of management policies, procedures, and practices to the tasks...