

The evolution of technologies, informatics, and program management with assuring quality in point-of-care testing.

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Abstract

The management of Point-of-Care Testing (POCT) quality is an on-going concern. Hospitals are now much better equipped to handle their POCT programmes thanks to developments in testing technology and the creation of specialised informatics. Almost from the beginning of American hospitals, point-of-care testing has been used in various forms. POCT was essentially uncontrolled for the majority of the 20th century, and nothing was done to control testing done outside of laboratories. After the passage of the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA '88) after the middle of the 1990s, typical inspections for hospital accreditation included a POCT programme examination as well. Most hospitals were at the time inadequately to deal with the new criteria.

Keywords: Point-of-care testing, Laboratory medicine.

Introduction

There was basically no automated data management for POCT years ago. In the patient's records or in log books kept on the patient care units, test results and relevant information were manually entered. To assess POCT documentation data, hospital staffs that were in charge of managing POCT had to go to each care unit separately. It was impossible to handle and review data in real time. Additionally, there were no guidelines in place to assure that all POCT devices were created in a way that allowed for easy integration with electronic data management software.

A POCT management program's main objectives include ensuring testing quality and regulatory compliance as well as encouraging effective resource management, including the use of tools, consumables, and staff time. Other significant advancement was the creation of vendor-neutral and vendor-specific commercial POCT data management systems that were specifically adapted to the needs of POCT. Point of care data management components are often absent from conventional laboratory information systems, and the current laboratory information system user interfaces are too complicated for usage by workers outside of the laboratory. There are three generations for data management systems [1].

A multidisciplinary POCT management team is made up of the POCT manager, a laboratory medical director, and representatives from nursing, and occasionally doctors. This team has the responsibility of managing the project, assessing new technologies, putting new tests into place, upgrading

devices, and educating and training employees to do testing. Giving granted institutional oversight of the process and make decisions about the policies and the broadness of POCT that may be offered at various sites is a critical element. Due to the dispersed nature of POCT testing locations across the hospital campus, it is crucial to have a strong POCT data management system to record vital testing data and oversee regulatory compliance, these solutions offer real-time access to select POCT devices and significantly decrease the amount of time the POCT team must spend obtaining data. There are more opportunities to do testing outside of the clinical laboratory as new POCT technologies become accessible [2].

We have seen a rise in the amount of requests for additional POCT, including requests to expand current testing to new locations and for the deployment of brand-new kinds of testing. Healthcare staff typically interprets a need more as a desire to increase the operational effectiveness of clinical services than as a strict medical requirement. It is crucial to continuously assess the suitability and clinical necessity of both new and existing POC tests because they can be more expensive than central laboratory testing and can be more difficult to manage [3]. It might not be appropriate to conduct a given POC test at a specific site for a variety of reasons. Medical necessity or the potential for the testing to enhance clinical procedures should be used to support the need for the test. The technology's analytical performance must be enough for the intended application, and the device must be trustworthy and resistant to instrument- or operator-related inaccuracies [4].

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Expertise aims to set for POCT associates & management staff

It is becoming more widely acknowledged that POCT coordinators are a legitimate laboratory medicine specialization. The American Association for Clinical Chemistry recently introduced a POCT coordinator credential course in acknowledgement of this. No POCT project will be effective unless it is run by a capable and knowledgeable manager/coordinator, regardless of the technology employed or how the administration of the project is structured. The manager will be an effective consultant for the POCT software system and have the interpersonal and group abilities to successfully complete the program's objectives thanks to the skill set, which combines specific professional knowledge with a high degree of interpersonal skills [5].

Conclusion

The creation of technology that allow laboratory testing to be performed at the Point of Care (POC) has generated exceptional prospects to boost healthcare services' operational effectiveness and, in certain situations, enhance patient outcomes. However, many institutions have found it difficult to achieve regulatory compliance and ensure the quality of Point-of-Care Testing (POCT). Assuring the quality of POCT remains difficult despite significant technological advancements. Major advancements in POCT devices have been made possible by regulatory rules from the federal and state governments, as well as accrediting criteria created by the College of American Pathologists and The Joint

Commission. Additionally, they have forced hospitals to set up POCT management procedures. Technology advancements, particularly in informatics, have greatly aided enterprises in their ability to comply with the rules, improving the quality of POCT. The fundamental framework of a POCT management programme has been thoroughly established during the previous 20 years. The crucial component to successful POCT programme management and high-quality testing is knowledgeable POCT personnel.

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