

LABORATORY LICENSURE SPRING ASCLS ASCP MEETING

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DISCLOUSER OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

I HAVE NO CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR
FINANCIAL GAIN FROM TODAY'S PRESENTATION

IOWA LABORATORY LICENSURE 2025

- WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT....
- WHERE HAVE WE BEEN....
- WHY CONSIDER LICENSURE....
- WHO ELSE BESIDES IOWA....
- WHAT WOULD IT MEAN FOR ME....
- WHERE ARE WE TODAY....
- WHERE DO WE GO AFTER TODAY....

WHAT IS LICENSURE?

AREN'T WE ALREADY LICENSED?

- By definition, to license is to authorize by a legal permit or to give formal permission from a constituted authority. Licensure is a governmental activity taken on behalf of the public to protect that public from potential harm. Licensure of personnel is often contrasted with certification, which is a private sector activity. A major difference involves the consequences of engaging in practice without each credential. If a license is required to practice a profession in a state, it is unlawful to engage in the work without one and the consequences of doing so are very serious. Not being certified may make it more difficult to get a job, but it is not unlawful to work without it. [Personnel Licensure - ASCLS](#)

ASCLS POSITION STATEMENT Licensure of Medical Laboratory Professionals - ASCLS

•Medical laboratory professionals must provide accurate, and reliable information using state-of-the-art technology to facilitate evidence-based patient care decisions. This clinical information has a direct impact on patient diagnosis, treatment, health maintenance, safety, hospital length of stay, as well as resource utilization, and patient satisfaction. In addition, such information provides an essential foundation for patient-centered care, improved health outcomes, and overall public health. Thus, licensure of medical laboratory professionals is essential to protect the public from substandard laboratory services and potentially misleading information by assuring that only appropriately educated and qualified individuals perform testing. Licensure not only benefits and protects the public but also medical laboratory professionals themselves. Advantages of medical laboratory professional licensure include the following:

- Enables improved quality of laboratory testing through entry level certification and ongoing competency requirements
- Defines and protects scope of practice
- Formalizes and elevates professional status by:
 - Enhancing public visibility
 - Increasing recognition from the public and other healthcare professionals
 - Balancing opportunities with other licensed healthcare professionals when competing for resources
- Improves recruitment and retention for the profession
- Aids in advocacy for the profession due to ability to collect data on the workforce

ASCP POSITION STATEMENT

- The American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) believes that states should license laboratory personnel, and that state licensure legislation should ensure that laboratory personnel possess appropriate academic and clinical training, pass competency-based examinations conducted by an approved national certifying organization, and participate in continuing education programs.
- Due to the complexity of laboratory medicine and its importance in quality patient care, it is imperative that medical laboratory personnel possess the qualifications necessary to ensure their professional competence. Licensure and certification programs not only set minimum standards for medical laboratory personnel working in clinical laboratories; they also help ensure quality laboratory testing and proper patient care.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN....

- In 2009 (and prior) a push was made to get a licensure bill through the Iowa Legislature.
- Some in this room have been around long enough to remember: Vicki Siefers, Virginia Schuerman, Bonnie Rubin, Jan Freichs, Judy Jackson, Keri Erickson, Kim VonAhnsen and myself (Tim Schroeder). It was a diverse group, encompassing Mercy, Iowa Health System, UofI, blood centers, rural and urban hospitals, pathologists, ASCLS and CLMA. All together there were at least 15 that made up an ad hoc committee. We had some support, but not enough support, from legislators, laboratory staff and pathologist.
- We also had opposition from some in the medical community that didn't fully understand or had misgiving for what were we trying to do. Some opposition was that it would increase wages, limit PPM, cover waived testing staff.
- In the end, the push was dropped when the opposition were more persuasive and vocal than the rest of us.

WHY CONSIDER LICENSURE....

- WHY DO YOU KEEP BRINGING IT UP
- The reasons that ASCLS and ASCP have had position papers on state licensure for almost 20 years hasn't went away.
- Primary source verification of MLT and MLS should occur during the employment process. Licensure would have already verified degree, training and continuing education.
- Personnel licensure assures that clinical laboratory services are performed with an appropriate level of professional competence by requiring entry level qualifications for individuals engaged in the practice of clinical laboratory science. Be recognized as a PROFESSIONAL.
- Personnel licensure defines and protects the scope of practice for medical laboratory professionals and consequently will prevent individuals lacking the required education and certification from assuming laboratory practice.
- Personnel licensure statutes include provisions to investigate the actions of any person holding a license to engage in the practice of clinical laboratory science. A license can be temporarily suspended or revoked upon violations of any provision of a licensure statute and/or charges that a medical laboratory professional's continuation in practice would constitute an imminent danger to the public.

An effective response to bioterrorism, pandemics, and natural disasters requires state public health departments and emergency preparedness agencies to identify, locate and mobilize the required educated medical laboratory professionals in a timely manner. Personnel licensure provides a means to identify and locate qualified medical laboratory professionals in times of a disaster. The medical laboratory professional serves as a first line of surveillance of infectious disease agents and is responsible for the early detection and identification of the etiology of biologic agents.

Think tornados like Greenfield encountered this year.

Remember COVID

Licensure would allow easier transfer of staff from one facility to another and that the staff were able to perform at an acceptable level at the requesting laboratory.

WHO ELSE BESIDE IOWA....

- 11 states and one territory license laboratory personnel.
- These include: California, Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Puerto Rico.
- The state of Georgia does not license laboratory personnel but does specify personnel requirements that are more stringent than those required by the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA).
- Certification is utilized by every state that licenses laboratory personnel to assess the initial competency of licensure candidates.
- In recent years, Minnesota, Texas and Missouri have introduced licensure. Those efforts were abandoned after several years. Minnesota was probably the closest to add licensure. It has been over 15 years since a successful addition to state licensure.

WHAT WOULD IT MEAN FOR ME....

- If you took and passed the ASCP BOR, ASMT, or other recognized certification. You would be eligible for state licensure.
- Complete continuing education required to keep your certification current.
- Don't engage in activities such as:
- Professional incompetence
- Violation of any standard of professional conduct including falsification of records or data or HIPAA violations
- Engaging in dishonorable, unethical, or unprofessional conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud or harm the public
- Providing professional services while mentally incompetent, under the influence of alcohol or narcotic or controlled dangerous substance that exceeds therapeutic amounts or without valid medical indication
- Conviction or violation of any state or federal law, rule, or regulation that specifically relates to the discipline for which the individual is licensed
- Pay the required renewal fees, submit your current certification documentation to the oversight board.

Personal experience working in Tennessee

- I was in the last group that had to take the State of Tennessee developed and administered test. Now recognize national certifications.
- Continuing Education was offered through the Community Colleges
- Most Continuing Education courses were on Saturday and taught by laboratory staff. Continuing Education was offered year-round with minimal expense, usually picked up by the employer.
- Requirement that for non-waived testing laboratories that a CLIA General Supervisor or above was present during any patient testing.
- If problems or questions arose during testing, chemical spills, emergencies there was an “In Charge” there. Similar to a Charge Nurse, except for the laboratory.
- I felt that the Quality of patient results were never in question. Surveyor were not feared. The reference lab that I worked in was state inspected approximately every 6 months plus the 2-year CAP. One day we had EPA, OHSA and the State waiting in line. I was in charge that day, lucky me.

WHERE ARE WE TODAY....

- Education has been provided to you.
- Reasons to continue to pursue licensure in Iowa are still there
- Do you want recognized as a professional in Iowa?
- [Licenses & Permits | Iowa.gov](https://www.iowa.gov/licenses-permits) for a list of professionals recognized and licensed
- Feed back Where do you think we are
- Minimum additional work on your part to be a professional

WHERE DO WE GO AFTER TODAY....

WHERE WE GO OR DON'T GO IS UP TO US AS AN OCCUPATION

- GET INVOLVED WITH ONE OR MORE “PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS” IN IOWA ASCLS, ASCP, Iowa Pathology Association
- Talk to your Pathologist(s)
- Talk to your staff that didn't attend today
- I have copies of the bill that was presented to the legislature in 2009
- Volunteers to get the effort going again...
- Continue to stay the way we are, why change

QUESTIONS DISCUSSION

- SOURCES INCLUDE
- ASCLS WEBSITE
- ASCP WEBSITE
- Tim's contact
- tschroeder@mahaskahealth.org
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