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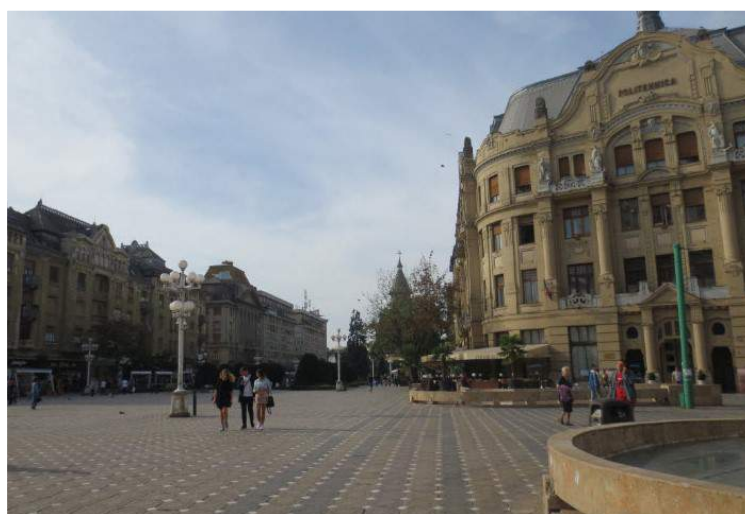
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The International Arena of Proficiency Testing

The fall of 2015 was truly an interesting time for Dr. Noble and for Clinical Microbiology Proficiency Testing (CMPT). Proficiency testing (PT) has international importance and is essential for laboratories around the world. PT testing is a Quality requirement expressly stated in the international standard ISO15189:2012: *Medical laboratories – requirements for quality and competence*. Most testing laboratories in public health and industry, nationally and internationally, are required to be accredited to another international standard, ISO17025:2005*: *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*, which also requires proficiency testing as an essential quality indicator.

Further, the World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes that laboratory quality improvement in developing countries will be strongly assisted by the creation of new proficiency testing programs in those countries, rather than depending upon proficiency samples sent from large interna-

tional distributors. This fall, Dr. Noble got an opportunity to participate in meetings that addressed all three of these agendas.



Timisoara, Romania

In early September, Dr. Noble was an invited speaker at the 5th biennial meeting of PT-CONF, a proficiency testing meeting held in Romania. This year, the meeting was held in the city of Timisoara, a university city and Romania's secondly largest city on the west side of the country near the shared border with Serbia and Hungary.

He was invited to speak on proficiency testing as a component of university-based activities and of CMPT's growth in the areas of research and development and innovation.

Most of the attendees were from eastern European countries. Few attendees addressed issues directly related to PT for medical laboratories; indeed CMPT was the only pro-

laboratory quality improvement in developing countries will be strongly assisted by the creation of new proficiency testing programs

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gram that was part of the medical laboratory arena. Many participants worked with water testing laboratories (as does CMPT), others worked with cement laboratories, ensuring that the laboratories assessing the strength and stability of cement are competent; (it is refreshing to know that laboratories are actively involved in assessing the quality of cement used in the construction of bridges and buildings). There were participants from the ship building industry where laboratories monitor the degree of rust that develops in the steel used in ship hulls over time in waters of differing salinity. Others monitor the fastness of dyes in a variety of fabrics used in the clothing industry. That is something to think about the next time you are taking a ferry ride or purchasing a new shirt.

At first glance, one might think that assessing laboratories in this wide swath of industries would have little in common, but the reality is that many aspects of PT are shared by all of them. Samples are planned, created, and sent to laboratories for testing. These samples have to meet certain standards for homogeneity and stability and need to be appropriately constructed to resemble true life experiences and pressures (In CMPT, we call that being *clinically relevant*). Testing performance has to be statistically reliable and reproducible; in addition, all the PT programs should be expected to meet their own international standard for reliable performance (ISO17043:2010: *Conformity*

Assessment: General requirements for proficiency testing). We can proudly say that CMPT was internationally accredited to the standard in May 2015.

On the way home from Timisoara, Dr. Noble travelled to



Geneva and had the opportunity to chair the meeting of international proficiency testing experts at the main headquarters of WHO.

In addition to CMPT representing Canada, the meeting was also attended by experts from United Kingdom, France, Kenya, South Africa, Cambodia, Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Switzerland, and the United States.

The collective mission was to redevelop a manual that was first created by WHO in 2002, and to give some instruction on what a developing country needs to consider when creating a new PT program or expanding an existent one. CMPT had much to contribute because we have been providing training and insights to that effect for many countries over the past 12 years. What was of interest to us on a personal level was that four of the countries represented at meeting had participated in “CMPT Training” and had successfully implemented CMPT’s methodologies into their program. Even more importantly, one of those countries has started



WHO, Geneva, Switzerland

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their own successful training program based on our methodologies. This was something that we consider not as a threat to CMPT, but rather as a true measure of success and confidence in the samples that we create and services we provide.

Finally, Dr. Noble represented CMPT at the annual EQALM meeting, held this year in Bergen, Norway. EQALM (European Organization for External Quality Assessment for Laboratory Medicine) was developed 20 years ago as the European meeting for PT providers and over time, it has become the premier PT annual international meeting which also includes the participation of programs from North America, South America, and India. This year, Dr. Noble gave a presentation on the CMPT Paper Challenge program as a PT instrument to assess medical laboratories for pre-examination, safety, quality management, and post-examination issues. The presentation was well received, and several other countries are considering developing similar programs.



Bergen, Norway

We are proud to announce that this year, Dr. Noble was appointed Chair of EQUALM Microbiology Section.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Change in Grading Practices — Clinical Microbiology

For the last 4 years, CMPT has taken a strict position on laboratories reporting proficiency testing results using incorrect identifiers.

Under CMPT's current practice, when a result is reported using an incorrect identifier, every graded component of that particular challenge is graded 0. This was to reflect that, no matter how well the analysis is done, if the report contains the wrong identification, the report may end up in the wrong hands or may not reach the patient and, as a result, the intended purpose for the test is incomplete.

CMPT's grading approach did not sit well with many laboratory representatives, who felt the whole reporting process, when it came to PT samples, was artificial and did not reflect the reality in their laboratory. CMPT acknowledges this, and understands that while this may be true, the CMPT reporting process is not designed for any specific laboratory's LIS system, but for the use of laboratories across Canada and internationally. That being said, the importance of double checking reports, including patient identifiers, should not be overlooked.

As a compromise, the Clinical Microbiology Committee has developed a different approach for addressing this issue. Starting in May 2016, **the laboratories reporting results using an incorrect identifier will not be graded 0 for all graded components. For each incorrect/missing identifier, the laboratory will receive REPORT ERROR MARKS (1 point for every reporting error), the points will be tallied and a total will be indicated on the survey result letter.**

The laboratory/accreditation bodies will have access to the accumulated points/marks, which will enable the laboratories to evaluate and address reporting error problems within the laboratory.

PLEASE NOTE: Laboratories using the WRONG FORM to report results will still be GRADED 0 for that report.

LABORATORY QUALITY MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

The 5th UBC POLQM Laboratory Quality Management Conference 2015 was held at the Pinnacle Harbourfront Hotel in Downtown Vancouver.

The conference was attended by participants from almost all Canadian provinces and also by visitors from Oman, South Africa, India, and the United States.

Topics covered included:

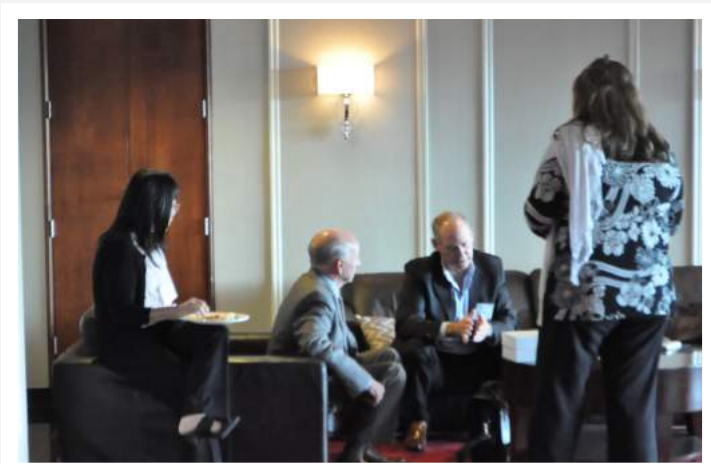
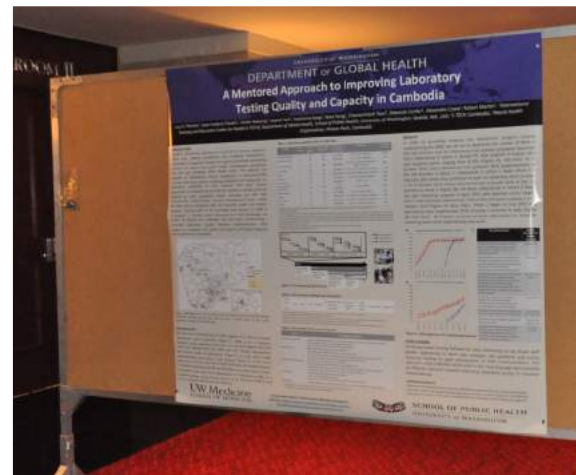


Not only was the content and presentations very current and relevant, but the place and format allowed for the interaction of participants, the creation of collaborative connections, and the development of new opportunities.

- Gathering information on Laboratory Quality
- Improvement of Quality of laboratories in limited resources countries
- Costs of poor Quality
- Risks in the extra-analytical phase
- Safety
- Adult education
- Conflict resolution

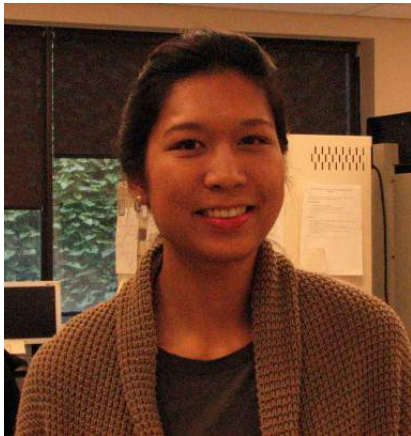
(for a complete program and Power Point presentations, please visit the Conference's website:

http://polqm.ca/conference_2015/schedule.html)



The Laboratory Quality Management Conference is one of POLQM's major on-going activities, important to our program mission, important to our role in laboratory leadership.

Welcome Fion to CMPT!



Fion Yung, MLT, BSc Research Technologist

In June 2015, Fion Yung joined the CMPT family as a Research Technologist. Here is her bio:

Fion Yung graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Waterloo, ON in 2009. In 2014, Fion obtained her certification as a medical laboratory technologist at the Michener Health Institute, Toronto, ON.

She worked at Southlake Regional Health Centre in Ontario as a Medical Laboratory Technologist before she moved to British Columbia in early 2015.

Fion is an active member of the Canadian Society of Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) and is delighted to become the newest member the CMPT team.

We, at CMPT, are excited to have her as our newest team member and look forward to working together as CMPT grows.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE

<http://pd.cmpt.ca/>

The CMPT Professional Development Course has just started. We are excited to start this new course as we know it will be a valuable resource to our participants and their staff.

Registration is still open, please visit the course website: <http://pd.cmpt.ca> and register.

More than 80 participants have signed up so we are very excited about that.

For more information about the course, please visit the course's website or contact the course administrator:

restelli@mail.ubc.ca

As mentioned previously, registration for the course is only available to CMPT participants, however, we would like to evaluate the possibility to open it up to other laboratorians. If you are interested in our course, please send us an email and let us know.



*Innovation, Education,
Quality Assessment,
Continual Improvement*

Upcoming Events

JANUARY 2016

Laboratory Quality Management course (POLQM)

January 13 — June 8, 2016. Online

More info: <http://polqm.ca/registration.html>

APRIL 2016

CACMID – AMMI Canada 2016 Annual Conference

March 30 – April 2, 2016 Vancouver, British Columbia

More info: <http://www.cacmid.ca/2015/05/vancouver2016/>

26th European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ECCMID)

April 9 - 12, 2016. Istanbul, Turkey

More info: <http://www.eccmid.org>

JUNE 2016

LABCON 2016

June 16 - 19, 2016 Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

More info: <http://labcon.csmls.org/en/>

ABOUT CONNECTIONS

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ISO 9001:2008



ISO/IEC 17043:2010

