Quality System Management Review

Review of the laboratory's quality system is a key component for maintaining data integrity, quality and efficiency. The Quality System Management review summarizes Quality Assurance (QA) activities conducted by lab employees to meet the goals of improving laboratory operations and data quality and increasing customer satisfaction. The purpose of the review is to document lab activities that advance these goals based on customer feedback, performance testing, audits, and corrective actions. The elements of this review conform to the requirements of the 2009 TNI standard, V1M2, section 4.15**.** The laboratory's quality system management review consists of seven (7) elements:

1) Annually, all laboratory supervisors review the laboratory's Quality Manual. Laboratory supervisors may submit proposed changes to the manual. Upon approval of the revised manual by senior technical directors and the Quality Assurance Officer (QAO), a new revision is published. The revised quality manual is signed by technical directors and published for dissemination online via the Internet.

2) Annually, all laboratory supervisors review standard operating procedures (SOPs) for which they are responsible. The updated SOPs are certified by the QAO. Once certified an SOP is valid for a year (365 days) and must be recertified before it expires. Approval of revised or existing SOPs is performed according to SOP LB-001.

3) The QAO performs a system audit once annually. The audit consists of a physical system and data audit. The protocol for conducting the audit is documented in the laboratory's Quality Manual. Any valid deficiencies noted as a consequence of internal or external audits are corrected by incorporated new or revised protocols into the laboratory's quality system. Incorporation of new or revised protocols into the laboratory's quality system may be accomplished through changes to SOPs or by revisions to the Quality Manual.

4) Performance reports are generated monthly, semi-annually and annually to track workload performance, efficiency and spending. The reports are maintained by the laboratory and disseminated to laboratory supervisors.

5) Regular staff meetings are held to discuss quality issues, workload and staffing issues and other items of importance to the laboratory. Necessary changes to the quality system as a consequence of performance on proficiency samples, round robins, split samples or audits are discussed for incorporation and implementation.

6) Feedback from clients received via email or phone is collected and acted upon on throughout the year. An online customer satisfaction survey is conducted annually. Detailed customer feedback from the survey is reviewed by the laboratory's senior management and used to improve laboratory operations. Improvements and corrective actions are implemented on a continuous basis throughout the year. Other key performance indicators such as the sample workload and turn-around-times for sample results are also included in the review. When non-conformances occur, corrective actions to fix them are documented in non-conformance reports that are included in laboratory reports sent to customers.

7) The QAO prepares an annual report summarizing the completion of items 1 through 6 to include the completion date and responsible personnel for each of the activities. This report will include a summary of assessments by external bodies, the results of inter-laboratory comparisons or proficiency tests, QC activities, staffing issues or any relevant client feedback or complaints.

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