

REPORT OF THE QUALITY AUDIT OF 16 UGANDAN LABORATORIES BY AFRICAN SOCIETY FOR LABORATORY MEDICINE (ASLM) FROM 21ST TO 25TH NOV 2016

Background

To strengthen the laboratory quality systems of its member countries in a stepwise fashion, WHO-AFRO established a Stepwise Laboratory Quality Improvement Process Towards Accreditation (SLIPTA) initiative in accordance with its core functions of setting norms and standards and building institutional capacity. WHO also developed Strengthening Laboratory Management Towards Accreditation (SLMTA), a task-based, hands-on training program directly linked to and therefore facilitating implementation of the SLIPTA initiative.

Uganda Ministry of Health through the Central Public Health Laboratories (CPHL)/Uganda National Health Laboratory Services (UNHLS) adopted the WHO SLIPTA/SLMTA initiative and has been implementing it since 2010.

Over the years, there has been some good progress in the laboratory quality management system and a number of laboratories have formed consistently well in the various monitoring audits. MOH chose 16 of these well performing laboratories to fast-track for international accreditation to ISO 15189 standards under South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) by the year 2017.

The Africa Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM), was invited to audit the 16 laboratories from 21st to 25th November 2016 as part of preparatory processes for international accreditation to ISO 15189 through the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS)

Introduction

The African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) audited 16 Ugandan Hospital Laboratories from 21st to 25th November 2016 on the invitation from the Ministry of Health through CPHL/UNHLS.

The audit was performed by a team of 32 auditors lead by 8 senior ASLM certified SLIPTA auditors and 24 trained SLIPTA audit apprentices. The 8 lead auditors came from various Countries of Africa namely Malawi (1), Nigeria (1), South Africa (2), Uganda (2), and Zimbabwe (2).

The auditors were grouped into 8 different teams with each senior auditor leading a team consisting 3 auditor apprentices. Each team audited 2 laboratories within the week.

Purpose and objectives of the audit

The overall purpose of the ASLM audit was to prepare the 16 Laboratories for international

Specific objectives

- ✓ To audit the Laboratories using WHO SLIPTA Checklist version 2015

- ✓ To identify specific areas of improvement
- ✓ To recommend the Laboratories that should be focused on for accreditation in the short and medium term
- ✓ To certify the 24 auditors apprentices

Methodology

Pre-audit briefing

There was a pre-audit briefing by the overall team leader who provided tools and information necessary for the auditors to perform their work smoothly. The team leader also instructed the senior auditors on how to assess the auditor apprentices to facilitate their certification processes.

The audit process

The audits were conducted using the WHO SLIPTA checklist version 2015 with close reference to ISO 15189 standards version 2012. The auditors asked for records to show evidence of the SLIPTA implementation, and they observed practices as well. The teams used day one for full audit, wrote and sent reports to the laboratory management teams and the lead auditor late in the night of audit and went the following day to do technical debrief in the laboratory and administrative debrief to the Hospital management teams.

Post-audit central debrief.

Following the audit process, the team leader compiled all the reports into one presentation/report, and all the auditors came together to discuss and agree on the report before it was presented at the central debrief meeting on Friday 25th November 2016 at Hotel Africana in Kampala.

The meeting that was officiated over by the Assistant Commissioner National Disease Control at the Ministry of Health, was attended by all the Directors of the 16 hospitals/health facilities whose laboratories were audited, the laboratory managers and the Quality officers. In attendance were also the Implementing Partners supporting the laboratories and those with interest in Laboratory accreditation; and representatives from World Health Organization Uganda office, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – Uganda.

Results, and recommendations.

The table below shows the audited Laboratories, the scores they attained and the recommendations of the auditors made in accordance with the number of stars scored, observed quality management systems, the laboratory total team involvement, and health facility management support.

Number	Laboratory	Star rating	Recommendation
1.	CPHL EID/Viral Load Laboratories	4 star	Can apply for International Accreditation immediately

2.	Mulago National Referral Hospital Laboratories	3 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation immediately
3.	St. Francis Hospital Nsambya Laboratory	3 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation immediately
4.	Mbale Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory	3 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation immediately
5.	Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory	3 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation immediately
6.	Masindi General Hospital Laboratory	3 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation immediately
7.	Mildmay Uganda Laboratory	2 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation after 3 months
8.	Masaka Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory	2 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation after 3 months
9.	Atutur General Hospital Laboratory	2 Star	Can apply for accreditation after 3 months
10.	Lira Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory	2 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation after 9 months
11.	Kiryandongo General Hospital Laboratory	2 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation after 9 months
12.	Kayunga General Hospital Laboratory	2 Star	Can apply for International Accreditation after 9 months
13.	Arua Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory	1 Star	Should be helped to improve the system
14.	Kabale Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory	1 Star	Should be helped to improve the system
15.	Entebbe General Hospital Laboratory	1 Star	Should be helped to improve the system
16.	Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital Laboratory	Did not qualify for star yet	Should be helped to improve the system

The 24 audit apprentices listed below were all certified as SLIPTA auditors. ASLM recommended that the newly certified auditors should first work with senior auditors before they can be given a leading role.

The ASLM certified auditors

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