Purpose:

To ensure the continuous improvement in the provision of Microbiology services, the external proficiency testing programs provide educational opportunities for the staff and to fulfill regulatory requirements for the operation of the laboratory.

- Proficiency testing programs required for subscription are:
  - Quality Management Program for Laboratory Services - Ontario Laboratory Act (QMPLS-OLA)
  - College of American Pathologists (CAP)
  - MDS Laboratories Proficiency Testing for Bacteriology
  - LCDC Proficiency Testing for Hepatitis and HIV

  All tests performed by the Department will be included in one or more of the above proficiency testing programs.

- Testing is performed by bench technologists alongside regular patient samples following protocol as per Laboratory Procedure Manual. Proficiency testing samples are not blinded.

Procedure:

1. Quality Assurance Technologist organizes the purchase order and import permits for CAP programs annually (November/December of each year). QMPLS-OLA, MDS Laboratories and LCDC programs do not require to be purchased.

2. When proficiency testing samples arrives, Quality Assurance Technologist labels samples with a generic patient name and distribute samples to the appropriate benches for testing.

3. Enter the date of arrival of the test samples into the Proficiency Testing Log - QPCMI05001a.

4. Bench technologists perform testing alongside regular patient samples.

5. Technologists follow testing protocol as per Laboratory Procedure Manual.

6. A charge/Senior technologist reviews final results as regular patient samples.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Section: Process Control</th>
<th>Subject Title: Proficiency Testing Procedure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepared by: QA Committee</td>
<td>Original Date: October 16, 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued by: Laboratory Manager</td>
<td>Revision Date: April 30, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved by: Laboratory Director</td>
<td>Annual Review Date: May 12, 2003</td>
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7. Quality Assurance/Senior Technologist organizes the posting of the results.

8. Quality Assurance/Senior Technologist receives the Proficiency Testing Results Reports and enters the date received and results into the Proficiency Testing Log - QPCMI07001a.

9. Charge Technologist signs off Proficiency Testing Results Reports and initial investigation on any discrepant result.


11. Charge Technologist reports Proficiency Testing Results Reports to the Departmental Senior Staff and General Staff meetings.