

Executive Summary
2002 Annual Survey of Accredited/Approved
Medical Laboratory Science Programs

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Program directors of 632 educational programs in medical technology/clinical laboratory science (MT/CLS), medical/clinical laboratory technician (MLT/CLT), specialist in blood banking (SBB), histotechnician (HT), histotechnology (HTL), cytotechnology (CT), and phlebotomy (PBT) were invited by e-mail to participate in our 2002 survey of educational programs. There were 491 surveys completed for an overall response rate of 77.7%. This year was the first year for NAACLS approved phlebotomy programs which had the lowest response rate (approximately 50%). Refer to Table 1.

Most of the programs surveyed (97%) remained active educational programs since the last survey in 2000. Refer to Table 2.

Most MT/CLS programs continue to be based in hospitals (49%) despite the closure of many hospital programs over the past two decades. Refer to Table 3.

Over 50% or more of the programs in MLT/CLT, HTL, and PBT saw increases in applicants in the 2002 survey. The MT/CLS programs reported the greatest decline; about 25% of programs reported a decrease in applicants. Refer to Table 4.

Most programs reported no change or an increase in the quality of applicants. Refer to Table 5.

Overall, there were 25% more new students enrolled in 2002 compared to the number of graduates in that same year; however, the overall attrition rate (collected for the first time in this series of surveys) was 23%. Overall, there were over 4,000 new graduates produced by the programs reporting and another 5,500 plus students entered the pipeline. Refer to Table 6.

The most commonly used recruiting materials are self-developed by program officials. The most commonly used recruiting strategies are participation in high school and college career fairs. Only 5.6% of programs report using stipends to attract students. Refer to Table 7.

About half the programs (55%) of all programs stated they changed curricula during the past year. Of those programs that reported curricular changes, adding molecular content, management skills, and online content were the most frequent curricular changes. Refer to Figure 1.

Table 1. Response rate by program type

	Percentage	N
CT	7.3%	36
HT	3.9%	19
HTL	1.6%	8
MLT	34.4%	169
MT	43.0%	211
PBT	7.5%	37
SBB	2.2%	11
Total	100.0%	491

Table 2. Program status

Active	97%
Inactive	1%
Closed	2%

Table 3. Program Type by Program Setting

	CT	HT	HTL	MLT	MT	PBT	SBB
Blood center	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	45.5%
Community college	2.9%	33.3%	25.0%	73.5%	0.0%	62.9%	0.0%
Hospital	28.6%	38.9%	50.0%	0.6%	48.8%	14.3%	36.4%
Other	17.1%	5.6%	0.0%	9.0%	4.8%	8.6%	0.0%
University/College	51.4%	22.2%	25.0%	16.9%	46.4%	14.3%	18.2%
N	35	18	8	166	209	35	11

Table 4. Changes in Number of Applicants

	CT	HT	HTL	MLT	MT	PBT	SBB
Decreased >50%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Decreased LE 50%	17.0%	11.2%	0.0%	15.0%	24.4%	19.5%	9.1%
No Change	57.1%	44.4%	37.5%	24.1%	34.0%	27.8%	45.5%
Increased LE 50%	20.0%	22.0%	27.5%	51.8%	34.9%	50.0%	27.3%
Increased >50%	2.9%	22.0%	25.0%	6.6%	4.8%	2.8%	18.2%

Table 5. Changes in quality of applicants

	CT	HT	HTL	MLT	MT	PBT	SBB
No Change	48.6%	52.9%	16.7%	54.2%	57.3%	63.9%	72.7%
Decrease	17.1%	0.0%	0.0%	14.5%	18.0%	11.1%	9.1%
Increase	34.3%	47.1%	83.3%	31.3%	24.8%	25.0%	18.2%

Table 6. Enrollment, Attrition, and Graduates

	New	Total	Attrition	Grads
CT	188	333	23	202
HT	189	325	25	133
HTL	65	111	20	43
MLT	2,604	4,540	841	1,402
MT	1,924	3,829	209	1,683
PBT	572	1,015	168	694
SBB	25	40	1	20
Total	5,567	10,193	1,287	4,177

Table 7. Recruiting Strategies and Materials

Strategies and Materials	Number Using	Percent Using
Recruiting Budget	145	31.2
Dedicated Staff	161	50.6
Advertisements	194	60.8
High School Career Fairs	223	69.9
College Career Fairs	204	64.0
Health Career Opportunity Programs	81	24.5
Scholarships	87	27.3
Stipends	18	5.6
Financial Aid	90	28.3
Alliances with Employers	68	21.5
Other Strategies	77	24.2
Self-developed Materials	304	96.2
Government Materials	13	4.1
Other Organization's Materials	180	57.0

Figure 1. Changing content of educational program curriculum

