AbstractID: 9840 Title: Putting the A into ADCL, the role of the Calibration Laboratory Accreditation Sub-committee

The Calibration Laboratory Accreditation Subcommittee (CLA) of the AAPM oversees the accreditation of the ADCLs (Accredited Dosimetry Calibration Laboratories) who provide calibration services to clinical users in North America and around the world. The AAPM accreditation is similar to other accreditation programs that use the international standard for calibration and testing laboratories (ISO17025) but with additional focus on technical competencies through a strict set of AAPM-developed Criteria. The purpose of this accreditation is to provide users with the highest level of confidence in equipment calibrations which form the basis for radiation treatments in the clinic.

The CLA is currently working towards obtaining recognition by the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA) that the accreditation program satisfies the ISO standard 17011. This standard covers accrediting bodies and one of its requirements is that AAPM develop a pool of trained assessors. The main of aim, therefore, of this presentation is to give potential assessors (who could be members of the AAPM outside of the CLA) an introduction to the accreditation process with particular focus on on-site assessments. Accreditation by the CLA requires a site visit every four years in which every aspect of the laboratories performance (as related to calibration services) is assessed. Quality manuals and procedures are reviewed and sample calibrations witnessed to verify that the laboratories are continuing to provide the high quality of service demanded by the AAPM Criteria.

Although this lecture is aimed specifically at a small sub-group of AAPM members there is much in the discussion of quality systems and the audit process that would of value to a wider audience. The details may be different but the approach set out here (e.g. development and review of Quality Systems, gathering of objective evidence) can be applied to a variety of QA applications in clinics and elsewhere.

Since it is not possible to cover the whole accreditation process in one lecture those interested in becoming assessors for the CLA should contact the lead author prior to the meeting for additional material to review.

Educational Objectives

Understand the role of the CLA in the accreditation of the ADCLs.
Understand the requirements of the AAPM Criteria for Accreditation.
Understand the steps in the accreditation process.
Understand how an accreditation audit should be carried out.