



National Laboratory Engagement Group

Career Progression Criteria Report

The Desired future state:

Interest – Medical laboratory staff are acknowledged and recognised for the skill and expertise they bring to timely and effective patient interventions

Both parties desire medical laboratory staff to be willing and able to add value to clinical services, adapt to a changing, and more complex environment, whilst contributing to the improvement of patient outcomes. Similarly, both parties recognise the benefits of a medical laboratory workforce that feels motivated and valued and are committed to pursuing the tangible and intangible rewards that deliver the outcomes specified.

The response

The response to the questionnaire was poor with only 116 responses received. 60% of those responses were received from 3 DHBs (ADHB, CDHB and CMDHB). 78% of the responders were MLSS with 63% working in one of the 3 major disciplines. 15% of responders identified themselves as managers. Over half of the responders were on step 9 or 10 of the scale; responses did cover the full range of salary steps being from 1 to 18.

The key points from the survey

It is clear that management view the CPC process differently from the staff.

- 90% of management responders know how the process works compared with 40% of staff responders;
- 65% of management responders believe staff think the process is ok; in contrast 67% of staff responders believe it does not work;
- over 55% of staff responders do not know what criteria they are being measured against nor whether they are relevant to their occupational class. 70 % of management state the MECA criteria are used and they are relevant;
- 70% of management responders state criteria are applied consistently compared to only 20% of staff responders;
- only 20% of staff responders believe that if they meet the criteria they will progress;
- 20% of management responders believe that the appeal process is pointless, likewise 42% of staff responders;
- 45% of management responders perceive CPC to be valuable whilst less than 20% of staff responders perceive it to be so;



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In contrast when it came to the two budget questions management and staff responders' views were closer.

- 60% of both management and staff responders think that budget provisions for advancement are inadequate; and
- 36% of management responders and 58% of staff responders believe financial constraints affect the application of CPC.

The response to the questions on benefits and problems, it is generally agreed that the current systems' major benefit is it is laboratory specific, standardized and has the potential to reward staff. However, on the other hand a common theme on the single biggest problem is complex, and it does not fit all departments, restrictive, needs to recognise local environment.

The current MECA provisions explicitly allow for DHBs and NZBS to modify the criteria and process to meet local needs and this goes so far as allowing alternative merit criteria subject to these being agreed between the individual employer and the union locally.

Where to from Here?

A number of employers and employees are unaware of the flexibility within the current MECA. This is an opportunity for the LLEGs to consider what changes they could make to improve the merit progression approach to better meet the desired future state locally.