

**QUALITY OF MEDICAL LABORATORY
SERVICE PROVISION IN
TOWNSHIP HOSPITALS, YANGON REGION**

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ABSTRACT

The majority of medical decisions are based on medical laboratory tests. Studying the quality of laboratory services in public hospitals contributes to support the quality services for patients. A cross-sectional descriptive study design with mixed methods, both quantitative and qualitative methods, was applied to determine the level of compliance to practice standards, to investigate the process of quality assurance of the management systems and to explore the perception of patients and health providers on quality of laboratory service of 18 township hospitals, Yangon Region. A quantitative survey was conducted using the World Health Organization Laboratory Assessment Tool modified by the National Health Laboratory, Myanmar. The results of the study showed that the complete set of type C laboratory equipment had already supplied and all of the tests in the list of type C laboratory can be done in almost all of the laboratories. There was weakness in laboratory building facilities and utilities services, excess workloads with shortage of qualified human resources. There was emergency laboratory service provision in almost all of the laboratories. Although the test procedure manual and the manual for safety were disseminated, there were weakness of quality practice in specimen collection, labelling and handling, quality control procedures and programs and in the safety practice of waste management. The overall results identified areas of weakness for improvements in laboratories in township hospitals, Yangon Region. The IDI explored the satisfaction on skills and competence of laboratory technicians and the KII explored the needs for resources and challenges to improve the quality laboratory services such as more convenient tendering process and after sale service and strict supervision of the practice of laboratory technicians. This research is replicable and may serve as a baseline for further research on the quality of medical laboratory services provision in different levels of laboratory and for larger laboratory assessments and laboratory quality improvement studies. Further reform management of laboratory services guided by responsible person of hospitals is recommended to improve the quality laboratory services of Myanmar.