

Clinical Pathology – Without Clinical Pathology, you are just Guessing!

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Editorial

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Editorial

About 70% of all clinical decisions are driven by the information generated by Clinical Pathology/Laboratory Medicine. It is imperative that the discipline mount a continuing effort to develop and evaluate testing methods to improve patient care, enhance patient safety and garner greater efficiency. The importance of developing new testing methods is highlighted by the emerging pathogens and rapidly evolving methods, especially in molecular pathology. Increasing utilization of molecular testing, and mass spectrometry promises to change the existing paradigm of laboratory operations. Advances in microfluidics and miniaturization have the promise of vastly increasing the use of point of care testing. If successful, miniaturization of analyzers may take us back to the days when there was a laboratory in each patient area, and thus vastly increase the point of care testing.

Developments in molecular testing and mass spectrometry are rapidly transforming conventional microbiology to clinical chemistry, as happened with immunochemical testing. Blood Group and HLA testing are in the transition to gene based testing by next generation sequencing. Nuclear magnetic resonance testing has also made it into clinical laboratory testing. Increasing resolution of imaging methods has the

potential of transformational evolution in tissue diagnoses by in-vivo imaging.

It is likely that the rapid advancements will bring about paradigm shifts in Clinical Pathology and generate controversy in assessment of testing techniques and relevance of old and new tests in patient care. We need to recognize the contribution of vendors of laboratory equipment in introducing new techniques as well as the risk of conflicts of interest posed by the interface between commerce and patient care. In the case of paradigm shifting manuscripts, either introducing new methods and practices or questioning the validity of existing practices, there may be differences in the opinion of reviewers about the suitability of the manuscript for the Journal. In such cases, at the discretion of the editor, the manuscript may be published with an editorial note expressing the differences among expert reviewers.

