
Bureau Veritas introduces quality management system at Diagen Plus diagnostic laboratory

MOYAN TAPAN - 14/3/2009

Bureau Veritas corporation, an international leader in certification sector, has introduced a quality management system in line with ISO 9001:2000 international standard at Yerevan-based Diagen Plus laboratory. The introduction process lasted 6 months, after which the certification of Diagen Plus was carried out in 2008, NT correspondent was informed by Stepan Barakian, Head for Development of Bureau Veritas in Armenia.

He said that the introduction of the quality management system has resulted in great positive changes in work of Diagen Plus: "jointly, step by step, conducting internal audits, measuring the results, correcting the deviations, improving the processes and controlling them by means of analysis, Diagen Plus has a potential opportunity to conduct a lot of diagnostic tests".

According to the co-founder of the laboratory, Prof. Levon Karabalian, the purpose of introducing a quality management system at Diagen Plus founded in 2004 was that to organize work at the laboratory in such a way that "first of all, the staff will be sure that the results of the tests are correct".

The Director of Diagen Plus, Doctor Arsen Zakarian informed NT correspondent that a mechanism of weekly control is now used at the laboratory: every week a test done during that period is checked as an "attested control serum", which enables to analyse all the processes at the laboratory. Besides, another mechanism of control was recently introduced at the laboratory: for example, out of 100 serums subjected to tests during a day, 2-3 "anonymous" serums are tested the next day too. According to A. Zakarian, there was only one case of inaccuracy, which was corrected before the patient received the test results.

The scope of control has a third mechanism as well. In 2008 Diagen Plus was included in the system of international external control of quality of medical laboratories, under which the reference institute - German DGKL (Deutsche Variante Gesellschaft für Klinische Chemie und Laboratoriumsmedizin e.V.- Referenzinstitut für Bioanalytik) regularly sends Diagen Plus 2 pairs of serums already subjected to analysis. Diagen Plus has already passed 3 checks receiving the respective certificate of DGKL. It plans another 6-8 checks in 2009.

L. Karabalian said that thanks to such attention to the quality of their services, the number of those visiting Diagen Plus has grown in the past 3-4 months. Diagen Plus carries out almost the complete range of laboratory diagnostic tests: urine analysis, blood test, clinical biochemical analysis, as well as tests of all the chemical substrata, ferments, electrolytes, diabetes, thyroid gland, coagulability, infections, lipid metabolism, reproductive function, myocardium, oncological markers.

"I as a founder is quite satisfied that the quality management system is used at Diagen Plus, and we envisage continuing work in this direction as we have a bit more complex problem," L. Karabalian said. S. Barakian explained that as a result of introduction of the quality management system at Diagen Plus, the problem of introducing ISO 17 000 laboratory certification standard has matured. "Bureau Veritas can make comparisons with Europe, and I as an expert who has worked both in Europe and Armenia can say that there are only insignificant differences in the work style of

Diagen Plus and those European labs that I have seen in the past 30 years," S. Barakian noted.

As for the connection with medical institutions, L. Karabalian said that tests on mutations of the blood coagulability system are quite specific and considered as important by surgeons, but few medical institutions previously required that patients have such tests prior to an operation. However, after the seminars held at Diagen Plus, several hospitals began sending regularly their patients for tests on such mutations. "It is one example of establishing a medical institution - patient - laboratory link, but there are other ways to create links, ranging from dissemination of print materials to individual talks with doctors". The scientist added that many doctors call to receive comments on test results, but the laboratory is not an institution to make diagnosis: it is a generally accepted principle.

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