AABB Standards volume 6

In the previous standards chat, we discussed the customer standards, resources standards, and started talking about human resources. In this chat we will discuss training and orientation as well as qualifications and competence.

**2.1.1 Qualification**

* Personnel performing critical tasks shall be qualified to perform assigned activities on the basis of appropriate education, training, and/or experience.
* The *Hiring Policy, DLA-HR-017* procedure lists guidelines for hiring new employees. It includes the process by which candidates are screened prior to offering a position
  + As you are all already aware, the human resources team conducts background checks to ensure (among other things) licensure, certification, or academic credentials are met based on the job description. They will then visually verify and retain the applicable documents. All new employees in the blood bank must also pass a special background check to be approved to work with the irradiator.
  + New positions are created by the department leaders, in collaboration with human resources.
* The *Job Descriptions/Performance Evaluations, DLA-HR-019* policy outlines the process by which a job description is created. The Qualifications and Skill Requirements is always included.
  + - Some state legislatures require a specific Licensure in order to work as a Medical Technologist
    - Examples include California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Tennessee, West Virginia, and the territory of Puerto Rico.

**2.1.2 Training**

* The BB/TS shall have a process for identifying training needs and shall provide training for personnel performing critical tasks.
* The *New Employee Training Program* outlines our standardized system for developing and documenting training.
  + Several agencies regulate training in the blood bank, including the AABB, FDA, and CAP
  + Trainers are responsible for teaching policies, processes and procedures
  + BB Leadership ensures that new staff is competent to perform their job without direct supervision by observing employees working with patient samples.
  + Before an employee is signed off to work independently, they must complete a set of blind Type and Screen samples along with antibody identification.
  + Prior to working independently, new employees must complete a department specific orientation and a broader organizational orientation.
* *Workforce Orientation, DLA-HR-025* defines the broader organizational orientation including areas of safety, communication, computer access/standards, uniforms, benefits, timeclocks, and job specific training.
* Job specific orientation is completed around the same time and covers department specific topics such as overtime, standby, parking, a tour of the department and more.

**2.1.3 Competence**

* Evaluations of competence shall be performed before independent performance of assigned activities and at specified intervals.
* This standard is further regulated by the federal standards *42 CFR 493.1235 and 493.1451(b)(8)(9)*
* The *Competency Testing Program* procedure was created to address these standards.
  + It dictates that new staff is observed performing testing prior to working on their own, after 6-months, and annually thereafter.
  + This includes an annual performance assessment that assesses the employee’s problem solving skills, serologic problem solving skills, and an exam.
* The methods by which competency is measured includes
  + Direct observation of routine patient test performance
    - Including patient preparation, specimen handling, processing, and testing.
  + Monitoring the recording and reporting of test results
  + Review of intermediate test results or worksheets, QC records, proficiency testing results, and preventative maintenance records
  + Direct observations of the performance of instrument maintenance and function checks.
  + Assessment of test performance through testing previously analyzed specimens, internal blind testing samples, or external proficiency testing samples.
  + Assessment of problem-solving skills

The goal of the AABB Standards Chat is to increase staff awareness as to their purpose and how they impact the Blood Bank’s policies and procedures. If you have a question about AABB standards, please see a member of BB Leadership.