

## **Buenos Aires External Quality Assessment Scheme [ProgBA], Argentina**

### **Biennial report of activities**

*October 2015*

Since 1979 CEMIC, a non-profit private University Hospital, has been in charge of Buenos Aires EQAS (ProgBA) for Clinical Laboratories.

At the beginning, ProgBA was supported by the Special Programme in Human Reproduction from World Health Organization, and the International Atomic Energy Agency through Arcal VIII Project.

ProgBA objectives comprise the development of human resources through training of fellows and courses on traceability, analytical quality control and total quality assurance in clinical laboratories. ProgBA offers courses, seminars and workshops in Argentina and other Latin American countries since 1978. Development and implementation of external quality assessment schemes (EQAS), in which at present 750 Latin American laboratories participate, help to compare methodologies and commercial reagents or instruments in the region. Information provided by EQAS gives an objective point of view to analyze cost/benefit of such reagents.

Since September 2011, our EQAS specialties are accredited under ISO/IEC 17043:2010, Certificate N°PEA002 from the Argentine Accreditation Office (OAA). This recognition is unique for PT providers in laboratory medicine in our country. Besides, sample preparation and provision of the schemes are certified under ISO 9001:2008 by TUV Rheinland Cert N° 01 10006 062556.

Despite participants have the option to express results in SI units for all measurands under the scope of the PT accreditation, only some results of immunoassay measurands and enzymes are expressed correctly. ProgBA has found it difficult to change the usage of list A measurands to SI units, because in Latin America most laboratories do not use them for the expression of clinical results, as clinicians are not used to them. Lot of work is needed, mainly educational, with clinical laboratories professionals and end users.

In order to promote the consciousness on traceability, Drs. Graham Beastall (2013) and Piet Meijer (2015) have visited our University Hospital in occasion of the presentation of ProgBA end of round reports. On previous years Drs Jonathan Middle and Dr Catharine Sturgeon from UKNEQAS honored us with their visit, and Dr. Jean-Claude Libeer introduced ProgBA as one of the first non-european EQAS member in EQALM.



ProgBA links to the Argentine National Metrology Institute (INTI) and its Chemistry Metrology Direction have resulted in courses, workshops and presentations to congresses, and proved to be very useful in introducing metrology concepts in the clinical laboratory environment .

Establishing and maintaining metrological traceability for all analytes is a difficult task, specially in the south American region, as funding resources are scarce. As stakeholders of JCTLM activities, we contribute to IVD vigilance and try to promote the terminology and nomenclature system that is now being used internationally in the clinical laboratory community.

## **Programa Buenos Aires (ProgBA)**

### **External Quality Assessment Schemes for Clinical Laboratories**

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