

## Appendix E

### Proficiency Testing

#### External Assessment: Proficiency Testing and Other Mailed Evaluation Programs

Agencies may voluntarily participate in a proficiency testing program approved by New York State or the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, even though such participation is not required by CLIA for waived tests. Participating in proficiency testing or an external evaluation program is a relatively easy way to obtain an external assessment of the quality of waived testing. There are several programs in which a site may choose to enroll. Test samples will be received by mail on a periodic basis, usually two to three times per year. These samples include a combination of several (typically five) HIV antibody positive and negative specimens with results known to the program provider, but not to the participants. The participants test the samples as if they were client/patient specimens and send results back to the program provider.

In proficiency testing programs, the results from the individual participant sites are compared to the expected values. Each site receives a graded individualized report and summary report showing their performance and the performance of all the participants. In some evaluation programs, such as the Model Performance Evaluation Program (MPEP) offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), individual participant results are not graded; instead a summary report is provided with a compilation of results from all participants and a commentary on overall performance.

For more information, refer to the following Internet sites:

CLIA Approved sites: <http://www.cms.gov/clia/ptlist.pdf>

CDC MPEP sites: <http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/mpep/enrollment.asp>