Clinical Laboratory Integration into Healthcare Collaborative (CLIHC)™

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) convened seven Institutes from 1984 to 2007 on critical issues in clinical laboratory practice (http://wwwn.cdc.gov/dls/institutes/). These institutes brought national and international experts together to focus on the role of the clinical laboratory in providing quality testing services for improved patient outcomes. The Clinical Laboratory Integration into Healthcare Collaborative (CLIHC)™, established by CDC's Division of Laboratory Science and Standards (DLSS), is addressing some of the recommendations from the past institutes by focusing on important "gaps" that must be filled to optimize the ability of practicing clinicians to effectively utilize laboratory services for better patient care. The Diagnostic Algorithms team is a subgroup of CLIHC™.

Diagnostic Algorithms

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The CLIHC™ Diagnostic Algorithms subgroup is addressing clinicians' challenges in laboratory test selection by raising awareness of the complexity of choosing the most appropriate laboratory test for evaluating patients in what appears to be a straight-forward clinical setting. The group is developing sample diagnostic testing algorithms and exploring information technology tools to guide clinicians' selection of appropriate laboratory tests.

Strategies

- Publish practical scenarios to illustrate clinicians' challenges in appropriate laboratory test selection due to the complexity of test options for diagnostic evaluation
- Develop diagnostic algorithms for selected scenarios showing appropriate laboratory tests to guide diagnosis, treatment, and patient evaluation
- Publish diagnostic algorithms for appropriate laboratory test selection in peer reviewed journals
- Explore the development of information technology tools to guide appropriate laboratory test selection
- Pilot test and evaluate potential information technology tools to assist clinicians in the selection of appropriate laboratory tests

Potential Impact

Tools to guide clinicians in the selection of appropriate laboratory tests will reduce diagnostic delays and/or errors.

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