



ВСЕМИРНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ
ЕВРОПЕЙСКОЕ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЕ БЮРО

Working Group on the Role of the Hospital
Laboratory in Public Health

Stockholm, 8-12 May 1978

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TRANSLATION

INDEXED

DEVELOPMENT OF HOSPITAL LABORATORIES:
EXTENSION OF AVAILABLE SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY

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In the following fields of laboratory medicine (WHO Technical Report Series No. 236):

- (a) haematology and clinical chemistry,
- (b) microbiology,
- (c) histopathology,
- (d) sanitary and environmental hygiene,
- (e) epidemiology,
- (f) pharmaceuticals, biologicals,
- (g) research, development, reference,
- (h) consultation, information, training.



it is the responsibility of the public health authorities to carry out tasks in the interests of the community. Other medical laboratories, including hospital laboratories, carry out tests in the interests of individuals, sick and healthy alike.

Departures from this principle on both sides can occur and are significant; in particular, the size, the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories in the Länder and the regions are very different and conditions are frequently not comparable.

If for instance a public health laboratory is the only laboratory in a region which is provided with microbiological equipment, it will carry out such medical and microbiological tests as become necessary in that region on behalf of whomsoever this should happen to be.

On the other hand, hospital laboratories can carry out tests in the public interest, with the following conditions:

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(1) that a public health laboratory is not available for the task, either for geographical reasons or because it is overburdened or because it does not possess special equipment and staff;

(2) that the hospital laboratory is provided with a scientifically experienced and enthusiastic laboratory head, trained staff and adequate technical equipment, and applies the rules of statistical quality control.

If it is in the public interest that they should be carried out the following laboratory tests are particularly suited to being carried out by hospital laboratories, since they normally lie within the scope of the analyses which are made in hospital:

- (a) haematology and clinical chemistry:
screening for occupational diseases (e.g., lead poisoning),
screening for haemoglobinopathies,
alcohol testing,
alkaloid analysis,
forensic toxicology.
- (b) histopathology:
cancer cytology.
- (c) microbiology:
screening for phenylketonuria and other metabolic diseases,
serological screening methods, e.g., syphilis serology,
parasitological examinations (wet mounts, smears).

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1st paragraph, line 10, should read:

it is the responsibility of the public health laboratories to carry out tasks in the interests