

**EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS DIVISION OF THE
CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL CHEMISTS (CSCC)**

CSCC LECTURESHIP IN CRITICAL CARE MEDICINE

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“CRITICAL VALUES AND ACTIONABLE KNOWLEDGE IN THE 21ST CENTURY”

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ABSTRACT

The learning objectives are a) to understand the origins of critical limits, also termed critical values; b) to appreciate salient features of practice standards based on litigated case reviews; and c) to discuss new requirements for urgent notification in the laboratory and at the bedside. Critical limits define the lower and upper boundary values of diagnostic test results that represent life-threatening and also actionable knowledge for clinical therapeutic decisions. Whether or not required by accreditation agencies or legal statutes, urgent notification of critical results, both qualitative and quantitative, has become ubiquitous in the practice of laboratory medicine worldwide because of high impact on patient outcomes. In fact, recently in the United States, the Joint Commission promulgated new expectations for physician notification that hospitals find challenging. Any diagnostic test result deemed critical, including those generated at the point of care, must be validated and seamlessly communicated as a closed-loop “knowledge packet” within a fixed timeframe, generally no more than one hour. Tracking of physician notification assures that accreditation requirements are met. Participants are encouraged to review their hospital critical values policy and mechanisms for reporting and confirming receipt of critical results in order to reduce errors, enhance physician efficiency, improve outcomes, and meet the demands for essential and timely diagnostic data in the 21st Century.

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