

NZIMLS

THE NEW ZEALAND
INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL
LABORATORY SCIENCE (INC)



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
For 2019 - 2022

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Introduction

This document outlines the NZIMLS Council's strategic direction for the four-year period 2019-2022. It identifies the areas Council will focus their work on over the next four years and sets out the measures against which will gauge success in meeting these priorities.

NZIMLS Council

Mission Statement

The New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science is the professional organisation that represents those engaged in the profession and practice of Medical Laboratory Science in New Zealand.

It has an ongoing commitment to promote professional excellence through communication, education and a code of ethics to achieve the best laboratory service for the benefit of the patient.

Role of the NZIMLS

The NZIMLS is the professional body for the practitioners employed in Medical Laboratory Science in New Zealand. The NZIMLS provides continuing education, professional examinations, a CPD programme, representation in professional affairs and various avenues of communication including publication of the NZ Journal of Medical Laboratory Science (the Journal), to ensure the provision of high-quality diagnostic laboratory services for the public of New Zealand.

NZIMLS Structure

The NZIMLS Council is made up of the following positions:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary/Treasurer
- Executive Officer
- Region 1 (Auckland region) Representative
- Region 2 (Greater Waikato region) Representative
- Region 3 (Greater Wellington region) Representative
- Region 4 (Canterbury/Tasman) Representative
- Region 5 (Otago/Southland) Representative
- Technician Representative

The Executive Officer is an employee of the NZIMLS while all other Council members are elected on a two-yearly term basis and this professional service is on a voluntary basis. The President, Vice President, Treasurer and Executive Officer constitute the NZIMLS Executive. The NZIMLS Council also utilises the services of advisors such as the NZIMLS Journal Editor, CPD Coordinator and senior academics or relevant experts when required.

The following are employed as contractors or staff within the wider NZIMLS umbrella:

- Competency and Professional Development (CPD) Coordinator
- Business Operations Office (for accounting and membership)
- Information Technology Support Provider

The NZIMLS Council has four formal meetings a year held over two days at venues determined by the NZIMLS Executive

NZIMLS Council Strategic Direction 2019-2022

The NZIMLS Council has identified four core strategic priorities to be actioned for the 2019 – 2022 period. These strategic objectives have been identified as those requiring priority Council attention. The Strategic plan will provide a framework to allocate adequate resources and thereby ensuring positive outcomes for the priorities in an efficient and focused manner. Other day to day Council functions will continue to be performed but emphasis will be given to ensuring that the strategic priorities are actioned.

Background

The NZIMLS has a number of key roles and obligations within the medical laboratory scene in New Zealand. The NZIMLS Council structure ensures that each region within NZ has representation and a voice for any local and national issues. The NZIMLS Executive provides overall governance and leadership. From the many roles and tasks, the NZIMLS is involved with, a number of aspects requiring a more focused and targeted approach have been identified.

The NZIMLS QMLT examinations have been offered for candidates within the diagnostic laboratories in NZ for many years. The staff training needs within the diagnostic laboratories are changing. Therefore, the examinations and associated logbooks may also need to change to ensure they lead to a fit for purpose qualification.

The membership of the NZIMLS sits at around 3000, and encompasses scientists and technicians from every diagnostic laboratory in NZ. Times within our laboratories have changed with laboratories getting busier and members are increasingly having to do CPD activities, general professional service and NZIMLS related service out of work time. The important roles that members play in activities such as convening meetings, acting as examination moderators and examiners, giving presentations and supervising examination candidates, to name a few, are placing additional strain on many already overcommitted members. There is an obligation for the NZIMLS to look into initiatives to help spread the workload and ensure all members can contribute to the various role and services provided by the NZIMLS.

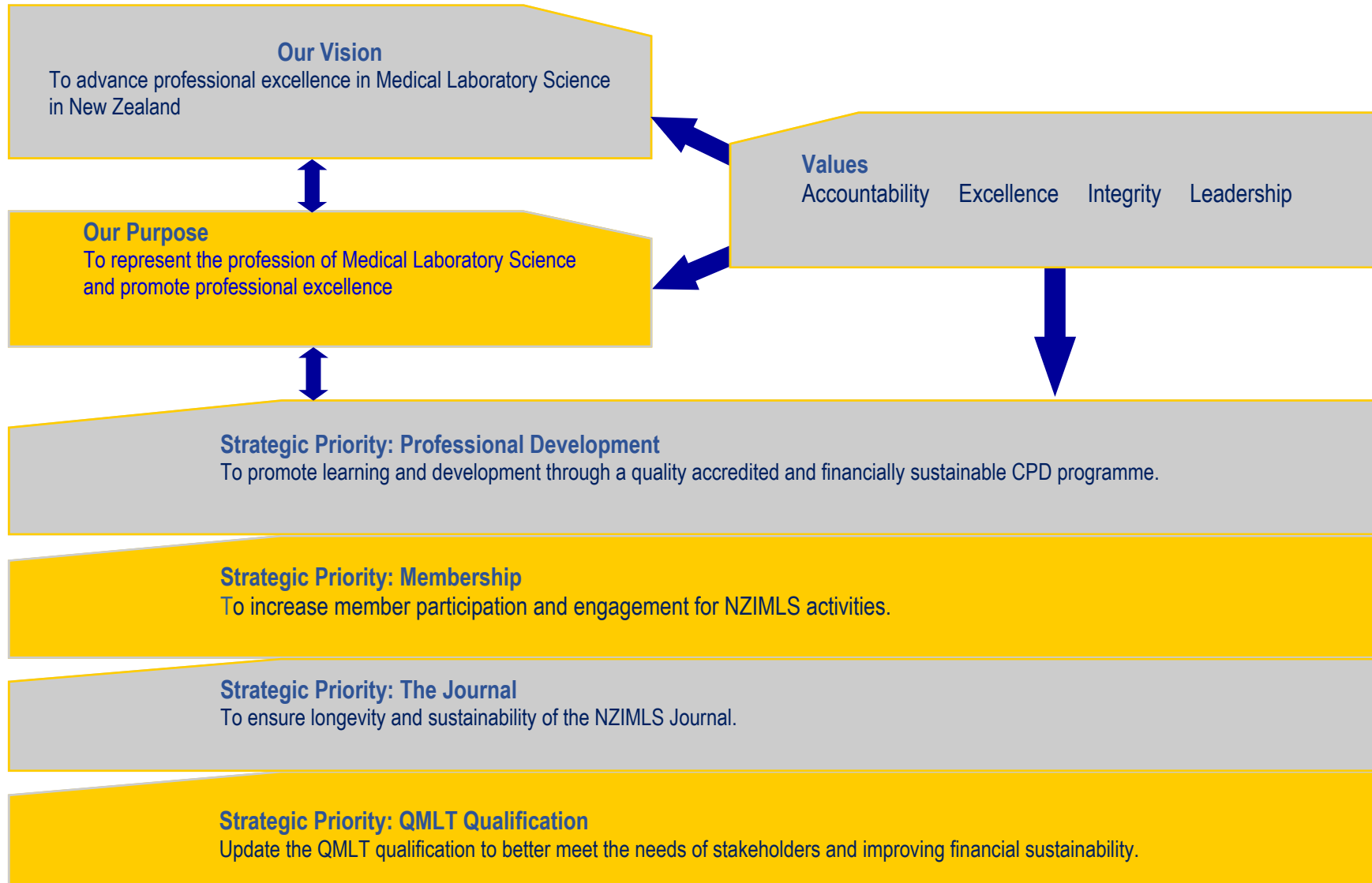
The NZIMLS has provided a successful CPD programme over recent years. The programme is simple and easy to follow and is utilized by a large proportion of the medical laboratory workforce within NZ. The way CPD is both offered and administered is currently under review with the MSCNZ and it is anticipated that the way practitioners will do their CPD will be changing in the near future. The NZIMLS must ensure that the CPD programme is aligned to meet the proposed changes while continuing to be both successful and fit for purpose.

The NZIMLS Journal is a well-respected publication within the medical laboratory fraternity and currently has strong leadership and experience within the Editorial Executive and input from the Editorial Board. The Journal faces challenges with regard to succession planning for the editorial responsibility of the Journal plus the future shape and availability of this publication. It is also acknowledged that there has been a drop in the numbers of members publishing articles in the Journal over the past few years. The issue of getting more members to publish and to look into different ways of presenting the Journal are challenges for the NZIMLS to address.

The NZIMLS strategic plan guides the allocation of the necessary resources to focus on these key priorities.

NZIMLS Strategic Framework

The following flow cart demonstrates vision, purpose and strategic priorities:



Vision:

Advance professional excellence in Medical Laboratory Science in New Zealand.

Values:

Accountability, Excellence, Integrity, Leadership

Purpose:

Represent the profession of Medical Laboratory Science and promote professional excellence.

NZIMLS Strategic Priorities for 2019-2022

NZIMLS Council have identified four priorities that will focus our work over the next four years.

Priority 1: Professional Development

To promote learning and development through a quality accredited and financially sustainable CPD programme.

Priority 2: Membership

To increase member participation and engagement for NZIMLS activities.

Priority 3: The Journal

To ensure longevity and sustainability of the NZIMLS Journal.

Priority 4: QMLT Qualification

Update the QMLT qualification to better meet the needs of stakeholders and improving financial sustainability.

Priority 1: Professional Development

To promote learning and development through a quality accredited and financially sustainable CPD programme.

The NZIMLS has provided and administered a CPD programme since 1995. The programme was first approved by the MSC in 2005 and has seen the enrolment of the majority of scientists and a significant proportion of technicians in NZ. The NZIMLS is cognizant of the importance of keeping the CPD programmes current for both MLS and MLT, with a strong emphasis on categories that promotes genuine learning and development. Although the NZIMLS is in the fortunate position of having the experience and knowledge to formulate and administer a successful CPD programme, significant engagement and adaptation will be required to fulfil changing accreditation requirements resulting from the recent MSC review of CPD requirements for both practitioners and providers.

Planned Initiatives

1. Ongoing review of all aspects to ensure a sustainable CPD programme.
2. Review of categories and means of achieving maximum learning and development.
3. Consultation with key stakeholders.
4. Investigate the current programme to include other professional bodies with the Allied Health Sector including ATs.

Success Indicators

1. Maintain successful accreditation with MSCNZ.
2. Membership fees provide a surplus of at least 20% to contribute to the financial viability of the wider activities of the NZIMLS.
3. Report submitted to the NZIMLS Council outlining the opportunities for including other professional bodies in the CPD programme by November 2020.

Priority 2: Membership

To increase member participation and engagement for NZIMLS activities.

Currently there are a limited number of hard-working NZIMLS members providing many volunteer hours to ensure that tasks and functions of the NZIMLS are carried out. The NZIMLS relies on members to fulfil a number of key positions to ensure the continuity of the organization. Examples include representing the NZIMLS in professional roles, seminar convenors, giving presentations at meetings, publishing articles within the journal, providing classroom questions and many other tasks and roles. It is also acknowledged that there is a perceived view that members do not always feel engaged or an important part of the organisation. There needs to be clear pathways and communication at all levels to have members feel aligned with the institute. The NZIMLS offers a number of awards, scholarships and grants that are not always obvious to the members. These awards help to provide recognition and prestige for the recipients.

Planned Initiatives

1. Investigate ways to remove barriers to member participation and active involvement.
2. Promote scholarships, grants and awards.
3. Enhancement of NZIMLS Council engagement with members to promote participation.

Success Indicators

1. At least 75% of presentations at NZIMLS SIG meetings, and North Island and South Island seminars are from members.
2. At least 50% of Journal articles published in the Journal are from members.
3. All scholarships, awards and grants are awarded each year.
4. At least two (2) new initiatives by Council directly relating to engagement with members.

Priority 3: The Journal

To ensure longevity and sustainability of the NZIMLS Journal.

The New Zealand Journal of Medical Laboratory Science was first released in 1946 and is now in its 73rd year of publication. This has long been one of the jewels of the NZIMLS. Of late there has been a noticeable drop off in articles submitted by NZIMLS members and this will need to be addressed to ensure continued relevance for members. The NZIMLS is fortunate to have a long serving Editor and experienced Deputy Editors. It is vital that succession planning for future editorial responsibilities be prioritised. Currently the Journal is distributed in both print and electronic formats. The long-term sustainability of the printed version requires review.

Planned Initiatives

1. Succession planning for editor.
2. Facilitating an accessible and easy to follow process for members to publish in the Journal.
3. Consider the impact of advertising in the Journal.

Success Indicators

1. 10% per year increase in international citations to Journal articles.
2. 10% per year increase in articles from NZ authors.
3. 10% per year increase in revenue from advertising in the Journal.
4. Stable editorial team with all positions filled and succession planning in place.

Priority 4:

QMLT Qualification

Ongoing review of the QMLT qualification to meet the needs of stakeholders and ensure financial sustainability.

NZIMLS has been responsible for national examinations since 1967, initially for Qualified Technical Assistants and Qualified Technical Officers. The NZIMLS was first accredited as a qualification provider by the MSC in 2008 under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (2003).

The NZIMLS strives to provide a high-quality qualification and is reliant on the voluntary services of members to maintain the curricula and practical assessment review logbooks, to act as examiners and moderators, and to participate on the Board of Examiners. Twelve examination disciplines are currently offered, each with a corresponding curriculum and logbook. Whilst some disciplines have relatively high numbers of candidates, some disciplines can, in any given year, have only one candidate or no candidates at all, resulting in low benefit in comparison to the resource required to continue to offer each discipline. At times, it can be difficult to find members with appropriate experience who are willing to volunteer to be examiners and moderators, or to be involved in curricula and logbook review.

The NZIMLS has over the past few years, implemented significant improvements to ensure standardisation and quality of the QMLT examinations, including implementation of the Board of Examiners, compulsory workshops for examiners and moderators and increased engagement with SIG Convenors regarding curricula and logbook review.

In addition to the work completed to date, Council consider it is appropriate to now undertake a review the QMLT qualification to assess whether there are alternative ways to better meet the needs of stakeholders and to improve the financial sustainability of providing the qualification.

Planned Initiatives

1. Explore alternative means to provide the pathway to the qualification to ensure the exam is fit for purpose and is financially sustainable.
2. Consult with employers and other key stakeholders.

Success Indicators

1. Approval by the MSCNZ for the proposed pathway changes.
2. 70% agreement from laboratory management for the proposed pathway changes.
3. Examinations process runs as a cost neutral.
4. Achieve maximum length of accreditation with the MSCNZ.