



The Present and Future of EQA

Anja Kessler, Dr., Referenzinstitut für Bioanalytik, Germany

The interest in the results of the External Quality Assessment Schemes has greatly increased in recent years. The laboratories must regularly take part in EQA schemes due to the requirements of accreditation or with regard to national regulations. The results are considered with large attention if the results of the surveys may have consequences for the laboratory. Beyond this scope, the large amount of data continuously gained through EQA programs is also of great interest beyond individual use.

Since the results are critically questioned, the organizers of EQA programs are required to meet quality requirements (for example, by being accredited according to ISO 17043) and to document these. The evaluation of results has to be conscientious and comprehensible. Therefore, the determination of the EQA surveys are linked in advance to a variety of scientific issues. The main focus of the optimization of EQA surveys is currently on the aspects of commutability of EQA samples and the use of metrologically traceable target values to assess issues of trueness of measurements. The establishment of these concepts is associated with great scientific efforts. Therefore, it is important to cooperate with scientific societies and metrology institutes to meet these responsibilities. The importance of these networks is growing, as the number of measurands for laboratory medicine is growing continuously.