

# Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory Accredited

Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory is the 10<sup>th</sup> medical laboratory to be accredited by SADCAS and the 4<sup>th</sup> medical laboratory in Botswana to be accredited by SADCAS. Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory has been accredited in the scopes: Virology; Haematology; Serology; Blood Bank; Chemistry; and Microbiology in accordance with ISO 15189: 2007. Through this accreditation, Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory based along Serowe/Palapye Main Road in Dinokwane Ward, Serowe has been granted the unique accreditation number: MED 010 indicating that Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory is now a SADCAS accredited medical laboratory. The Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory certificate which was issued on 19 May 2015 is valid for 5 years until 18 May 2015.



Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Cafeteria venue of the accreditation certificate Handover ceremony

The accreditation certificate handover ceremony was held on 25 August 2015 at the Hospital Cafeteria in Serowe, Botswana and started off with a prayer and followed by introductions by Dr N Kombe, Head of Serowe Health District Management Team. The Hospital Superintendent Dr G N Simwanza gave the welcoming remarks and congratulated the Laboratory staff for the landmark achievement and for a job well done. In the key note address Mr David Matema, the Chief Medical Scientific Officer gave a brief background to the establishment of medical laboratories in Botswana of which 40 now exist in the public sector. He said that accreditation of laboratories and hospital is in the forefront of the Ministry's strategy to improve the competence and quality of health care delivery system in Botswana and that they plan to have 19 public medical laboratories accredited by 2019 of which 9 including Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory have been accredited so far.

In her remarks Ms K Ntshambiwa, the Laboratory Manager outlined the journey towards accreditation which started in earnest in 2009 with the training of staff and the development of the quality manual followed by implementation of the system which she said was "tough and bumpy". An application for accreditation was submitted to SADCAS in November 2012

followed by an initial assessment which was undertaken in November 2014 after achieving a 4 star rating under the SLIMTA process. She then thanked all those who had assisted in the process, the laboratory staff, hospital staff and suppliers. She also thanked the Ministry of Health for the support, CDC Botswana for the equipment support, Botswana Bureau of Standards for the technical support and Nyangabgwe Hospital Laboratory for the mentorship.



From Left to right: Dr Simwanza, Mr Matema and Mrs Mutasa



Kgalemang JSS School Band



Mrs Maureen P Mutasa handing over the certificate to Dr Siwanza with Ms Ntshambiwa looking on

In the certificate handover remarks Maureen P Mutasa, the SADCAS CEO noted the tremendous importance of medical laboratories in any health care delivery system. The main purpose of a medical laboratory is to provide diagnosis and management system for the physician to use in the care of patients. "The competence and efficient operation of a medical laboratory as well as timeous delivery of medical laboratory services to the physician is therefore critical in any health care delivery system. Accreditation which is the process of independently evaluating competency is the strategy for medical laboratories to achieve this" she said. She noted that a number of countries in the region, including Botswana have embraced accreditation as a strategy for the competence of medical laboratories and this has spurred interest in the SADCAS Medical Laboratories Accreditation Programme with 26% of the applications under process being medical laboratories. At the time of the certificate presentation SADCAS had accredited 12 medical laboratories, 5 of which are from Botswana, 4 from Tanzania, 2 from Zimbabwe and one from Swaziland. Mrs Mutasa encouraged Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory to maintain its accreditation throughout the validity period of the accreditation certificate during which SADCAS would undertake surveillance assessments annually to ensure continued compliance. She also reminded Sekgoma Memorial Hospital Laboratory of the need to transition to the 2012 version of ISO 15189 within the stipulated timelines failing which the accreditation will be suspended. "If by 1 November 2015 SADCAS cannot confirm compliance with the 2012 version of ISO 15189 then accreditation against ISO 15189: 2007 shall be suspended on 1 March 2016" she said. She also encouraged the Laboratory to extend its scope of accreditation to other scopes of operation under the SADCAS Medical laboratories Accreditation Programme.



Tour of the laboratory

The ceremony was attended by over 50 including the Serowe District Councillor Mr Raditanka. Entertainment was provided by Kgalemang JSS School band. The vote of thanks was given by Ms K Ngwako the Hospital Matron. After the ceremony a tour of the Laboratories was also undertaken.

