§ 493.915 Mycology.

(a) Types of services offered by laboratories. In mycology, there are four types of laboratories for proficiency testing purposes that may perform different levels of service for yeasts, dimorphic fungi, dermatophytes, and aerobic actinomycetes:

(1) Those that isolate and identify only yeasts and/or dermatophytes to the genus level;

(2) Those that isolate and identify yeasts and/or dermatophytes to the species level;

(3) Those that isolate and perform identification of all organisms to the species level; and

(4) Those that isolate and perform identification of all organisms to the genus level.

(b) Program content and frequency of challenge. To be approved for proficiency testing for mycology, the annual program must provide a minimum of five samples per testing event. There must be at least three testing events at approximately equal intervals per year. The samples may be provided through mailed shipments or, at HHS' option, may be provided to HHS or its designee for on-site testing. An annual program must include samples that contain organisms that are representative of five major groups of fungi: Yeast or yeast-like fungi; dimorphic fungi; dematiaceous fungi; dermatophytes; and saprophytes, including opportunistic fungi. The specific fungi included in the samples may vary from year to year.

(1) An approved program must, before each calendar year, furnish HHS with a description of samples that it plans to include in its annual program no later than six months before each calendar year. At least 50 percent of the samples must be mixtures of the principal organism and appropriate normal background flora. Other important emerging pathogens (as determined by HHS) and organisms commonly occurring in patient specimens must be included periodically in the program.

(2) An approved program may vary over time. As an example, the types of organisms that might be included in an approved program over time are—

Candida albicans
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, HHS

§ 493.917 Parasitology.

(a) Types of services offered by laboratories. In parasitology there are two types of laboratories for proficiency testing purposes—

(1) Those that determine the presence or absence of parasites by direct observation (wet mount) and/or pinworm preparations and, if necessary, refer specimens to another laboratory appropriately certified in the subspecialty of parasitology for identification;

(2) Those that identify parasites using concentration preparations and/or permanent stains.

(b) Program content and frequency of challenge. To be approved for proficiency testing in parasitology, a program must provide a minimum of five samples per testing event. There must be at least three testing events at approximately equal intervals per year. The samples may be provided through mailed shipments or, at HHS’s option, may be provided to HHS or its designee for on-site testing. An annual program must include samples that contain parasites that are commonly encountered in the United States as well as those recently introduced into the United States. Other important emerging pathogens (as determined by HHS) and parasites commonly occurring in patient specimens must be included periodically in the program.

(1) An approved program must, before each calendar year furnish HHS with a description of samples that it plans to include in its annual program no later than six months before each calendar year. Samples must include both formalized specimens and PVA (polyvinyl alcohol) fixed specimens as well as blood smears, as appropriate for a particular parasite and stage of the parasite. The majority of samples must contain protozoa or helminths or a combination of parasites. Some samples must be devoid of parasites.