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Posted 23/04/2017

How to work out an appropriate QC frequency for each assay in your laboratory?

[Appropriate = Not inappropriate]

如何為你實驗室的每項檢測確定合適的 QC 頻率 ?

相信關於質控頻率 (QC frequency) 是現今臨床實驗室一個頭疼的課題 (Headache issue)。

行業里只有理論,沒有實際的指引和解決方案;純個人經歷,暫時都不可能有One size fits all 的質控頻率存在! 很多實驗室要嘛不做,一做就全做,省得自找麻煩。從來沒有人告訴你為什麼每 50 個病人標本就放一套質控 (QC) 而不是每 25 個、51 個或 102 個才放? 也沒有解釋為什麼是每 8 小時做一次 (套) QC而不是每 3、5 或 10 小時才做? Sigma-metric 可以解答部分問題,但是光靠Sigma 值去訂定 QC frequency 也有危險性,因為沒有把檢測項目出錯與病人承受的風險一起放進去考慮。我最近參考了關於這方面的專家學者討論的重點,想跟你們探討利用風險管理的基本概念,將個別檢測項目試劑和儀器的穩定性(穩定度越低,QC 頻率越高),分析系統的 Sigma 值(Sigma 值越高、QC 頻率相對可以調低),失控結果對病人的影響程度(危害越大、QC 頻率要增加才能減低風險),病人標本量(越大,失控重做要花費的時間和精力就越多…等等的參數量化(分等級);計算出所謂的風險因子,類似 Risk Priority Number (RPN),繼而決定該檢測項目的 QC frequency;風險因子越高,QC 頻率也應該相對地提高。大家覺得這個想法怎樣呢?

舉個例子: 血氣、血清鉀失控對病人危害比血清總蛋白大, 血清鈣的試劑又比起尿素氮更不穩定, 因此 QC 頻率相對較高; 這都是我們需要考慮的。

下面是我綜合此概念而整理的一些基本資料,謹供大家分享、交流和討論。

# How to work out an appropriate QC frequency for each assay in your laboratory?

[Appropriate = Not inappropriate]

The current practices regarding the minimum frequency of Quality Control (QC) are often based on regulatory requirements, such as CLIA's minimum of 2 levels of QC per day in the United States of America for most CAP certified laboratories.

ISO 15189 regulations don't state a recommended QC frequency but they do recommend in the technical requirement clause 5.6.2.2 that:

"Quality Control materials shall be periodically examined with a frequency that is based on the stability of the procedure and the risk of harm to the patient from an erroneous result."

ISO 15189 understands that differing tests and situations will require differing QC frequencies. So how do you use this advice to work out the appropriate QC frequency for the assays in your lab?

http://laboratory-manager.advanceweb.com/quality-control-frequency/

So the keywords are periodically, frequency, stability, risk of harm and erroneous result.

### **Deciding an appropriate QC frequency**

The minimum frequency for QC testing is the frequency defined by the manufacturer or the frequency defined by the regulatory agency that inspects or assesses your laboratory, whichever is more stringent. Other factors may cause the laboratory to decide to test controls more frequently. These factors include:

- the stability of the analyte and the method system
- the number of patient tests that are routinely performed
- change of instrument operators at change of work shift
- change of reagent Lots
- recalibration

Remember that if a problem is discovered, the samples in previous runs of the instrument may also have been affected. Once the problem(s) are corrected, it may be necessary to go back and re-run previous samples working in reverse order, until the retested results match the original results.

A different approach would seem appropriate to establish guidelines for QC frequency in the context of patient safety. In this case we need to look at the whole process wherein an erroneous lab test result may occur and can compromise patient safety.

Considering patient risk as a performance metric in QC strategy design was first considered by Dr. Parvin and Dr. Gronowski in Effect of analytical run length on QC performance and the QC planning process. The average number of patients with an unacceptable analytical error because of an undetected out-of-control-error condition was proposed as a metric for evaluating the efficacy of control strategies.

To relate SQC planning to frequency of QC, or run size, Dr. Parvin presented QC measures by which "QC performance is measured in terms of the average number of patient samples to error detection, or the average number of patient samples containing an analytical error that exceeds total allowable error", and coined the term Max E(Nuf) to represent the maximum expected increase in the number of unacceptable final patient results reported during the presence of an undetected out-of-control error condition.

Parvin CA, Gronowski AM. Effect of analytical run length on quality control (QC) performance and the QC planning process. Clin Chem 1997;43:2149–54.

There are various factors that you need to consider when deciding an appropriate QC frequency. A good place to start is by asking the right questions:

- Which assays are more stable compared to others?
- Which tests are higher risk and have a higher impact if results are erroneous?
- How many patient samples are you running in between QC evaluations?
- What is the time between QC evaluations?

If you ask the "right" questions, you'll get the "right" answers.

Unfortunately there is no straightforward answer to how frequently you should run QC. However, if you ask the right questions, you'll reach the right answer. Make sure you are running QC more frequently for high risk and unstable tests; ensure you start and end patient testing with a QC evaluation; and make the time between QC evaluations shorter than the time needed to take corrective action in the case of an erroneous result.

There's no easy 'calculation' that is derived from that assessment. It's still a very subjective process. So QC frequency is put in the context of all the other QA activities that you employ, but still... is there a scientific approach to determine appropriate QC frequency? That's the question!

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In this context, different test-repeat cycles might be expected and estimated in different clinical settings.

- For an outpatient or doctor's office service, one can estimate this cycle time to be as long as two or even three days.
- For a non-acute hospital setting, the test repeat cycle may be perhaps 4 hours.
- For an intensive care setting, the cycle time may be as short as 1 hour for chemistry tests and 30 minutes for blood gases.

Although there may not be many published studies that document the test repeat cycle time, it should be possible to estimate the repeat cycle time characteristics in most laboratories. With that information in hand, the laboratory could then plan the frequency of QC to ensure that repeat test results will generally be confirmed after new controls have been analyzed. Meeting this QC objective may impose increased QC activity in some settings, particularly those hospital laboratories that operate at the minimum frequency required by the CLIA regulations. For many physician offices, daily QC should be adequate, but there should be concern about reducing the frequency to once per week. Few medical settings would seem to justify such a low frequency as once per month.

We should always bear in mind that:

QC has limitations in its ability to detect error. Random biases and random patient interferences will not be detected by QC.

Besides suspecting assay error, many assay results are repeated because a condition is being monitored. Delta checks are a type of QC that is performed on these samples to determine whether the difference between results is expected. Exactly how the clinical laboratory could act on the knowledge that the clinician suspects that something is wrong with the assay result is a topic for clinical laboratorians to answer.

In summary, determining QC frequency is still a very subjective process. There are a number of important variables that should be considered in the decision-making. While there are statistical measures that can help assess analytic considerations and the fundamental reliability of the test device, QC frequency still needs to be put in context of all the measures you take to reduce errors. A policy to establish a standard checklist or procedure to determine QC frequency would be the basis for a legally defensible process that documents how your facility makes a key determination that directly affects patient outcomes.

## 如何為你實驗室的每項檢測確定合適的 QC 頻率 ? 【合適=沒有不合適】

關於 QC的最低頻率,目前的做法通常基於法規要求,比如美國 CLIA要求 CAP 認證實驗室每天至少檢測 2個水平的 QC 樣本。

ISO 15189 並未提供推薦的 QC 頻率,但在技術要求條款 5.6.2.2 中推薦:「應定期檢測質控品,頻率應根據檢測程序的穩定性和錯誤結果對患者的危害風險確定。」

ISO15189 認為不同檢測項目的情況有別, 需要安排不同的QC頻率。基於這種認識, 實驗室該如何確定合適的QC頻率呢?

http:/laboratory-manager.advanceweb.com/quality-control-frequency/

上述表述的關鍵字是定期 頻率 穩定性 危害風險和錯誤結果。確定合適的 QC 頻率

QC 檢測的最低頻率常由廠商規定,或由檢查或評估你實驗室的監管機構規定,從中擇較嚴格者而用之。其他可促使實驗室決定提高 QC 頻率的因素有:

- ➢ 分析物和檢測系統的穩定性
- ▶ 常規檢測的患者樣本數
- 儀器操作者的更替
- ▶ 試劑批號的更換
- ▶ 重新校准

請記住,如果發現了失控問題,它也會影響上個檢測批的樣本。一旦糾正了該問題,就需要以相反順序檢測上個檢測批的樣本,直至檢測結果與之前結果符合為止。

基於患者安全建立 QC 頻率指南或許也是一種方法。此種情況下,我們需要審視可能發生危及患者安全的錯誤檢測結果的全過程。

Parvin 和 Gronowski 兩位博士最早關注把患者風險作為 QC 策略設計中的一項性能度量,研究了分析批長度對 QC 性能和 QC 策劃過程的影響,提出了將在一個未檢出失控條件影響下發出的含有不可接受分析誤差的患者結果的平均個數作為評估控制策略有效性的度量。

為說明 SQC 策劃與 QC 頻率或分析批長度的關係 Parvin 博士介紹了一種 QC 方法,即「以檢出誤差所需患者樣本的平均個數,或分析誤差超出總允許誤差的患者樣本的平均個數,度量 QC 性能」,提出用最大 E(Nuf) 代表一個未檢出失控誤差條件存在期間增加的報告不可接受患者最終結果的個數。

Parvin CA, Gronowski AM. Effect of analytical run length on quality control (QC) performance and the QC planning process. Clin Chem 1997; 43: 2149–54.

在確定合適的 QC 頻率時,需要考慮多種因素。建議在開始前,先問自己以下 幾個正確的問題:

- 哪些項目相對其他項目更穩定?
- 哪些檢測的風險較高 ? 且當結果錯誤時影響更大 ?
- ➤ 在 QC 評估之間檢測的患者樣本數 ?
- ▶ QC 評估之間相隔多長時間 ?

只有問出了「正確的」問題、才可能得到「正確的」答案。

遺憾的是,關於檢測 QC 的頻率,尚無明確的答案。但是,如果你問出了正確的問題,你將能得到正確的答案。你需要保證,為高風險且不穩定的檢測以較高頻率進行 QC;在檢測患者樣本的首尾都要進行 QC 評價;要使 QC 評價之間的時間間隔短於對錯誤結果採取糾正措施所需的時間。

目前,尚未從這些評價中推導出一個簡單的計算公式,整個過程依然相當主觀。 因此,應綜合你實驗室採用的其他質量保證手段來確定 QC 頻率,究竟該如何 做呢?是否有一種確定合適 QC 頻率的科學方法? 這正是我們要思考和解決 的問題!

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關於這一點,不同檢測-重復循環可在不同臨床情況下應用和評價。

- 對於門診患者或醫生辦公室服務,循環評估時間最長可為 2-3 天。
- ▶ 對於非急診的住院服務.檢測重復循環可為 4 小時。
- 對於重症監護服務,化學檢測和血氣的循環時間可分別縮短至1小時和30分鐘。

儘管尚未有大量關於檢測重復循環時間的研究見諸報端,但在多數實驗室內可對重復循環時間的特性 進行評價。有了這方面的信息,實驗室就能策劃 QC 頻率,確保重復檢測結果都會在新的控制檢測之後得到確認。

為實現QC的這一目標,在某些情況下,需要加強QC活動,尤其那些按照 CLIA 要求的最低頻率進行QC的實驗室。對於許多醫生辦公室,每日QC應當 是可以的,但他們可能會考慮將頻率減至每週一次。個別醫療結構甚至認為可將 QC頻率縮減至每月一次。

我們應始終牢記:QC在檢出誤差的能力上是有局限的。QC通常無法檢出隨機的偏移和隨機的患者干擾。

除了懷疑檢測錯誤之外,許多重新檢測是因為發現了一個失控事件。Delta 檢查 也是一種 QC, 用於確 定患者樣本檢測結果之間的差異是否符合預期。當得知 臨床醫生懷疑檢測結果有問題時,臨床實驗室該如何應對,這是臨床實驗室需要 回答的課題。

綜上所述,目前 QC 頻率的確定過程依然相當主觀,在做出決定時應考慮許多重要變量。雖然統計學方法可幫助評估分析問題和檢測設備的可靠性,但仍需要綜合所有你用來降低誤差的手段來考慮 QC 頻率。 制定一份確定 QC 頻率的標準檢查表或程序,是建立一個經得起質疑的決策流程的基礎,以此證明你實驗室是如何做出此類直接影響患者後果的決定的。

# 如何为你实验室的每项检测确定合适的 QC 频率 ? 【合适=没有不合适】

关于 QC 的最低频率,目前的做法通常基于法规要求,比如美国 CLIA 要求 CAP 认证实验室每天至少检测 2 个水平的 QC 样本。

ISO 15189 并未提供推荐的 QC 频率,但在技术要求条款 5.6.2.2 中推荐: "应定期检测质控品,频率应根据检测程序的稳定性和错误结果对患者的危害风险确定。"

ISO 1 5 1 8 9 认 为 不 同 检 测 项 目 的 情 况 有 别 , 需 要 安 排 不 同 的 Q C 频 率 。 基 于 这 种 认 识 , 实 验 室 该 如 何 确 定 合 适 的 Q C 频 率 呢 ?

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上述表述的关键字是定期 频率 稳定性 危害风险和错误结果。 确定合适的 QC 频率

QC 检测的最低频率常由厂商规定,或由检查或评估你实验室的监管机构规定,从中择较严格者而用之。其他可促使实验室决定提高 QC 频率的因素有:

- 分析物和检测系统的稳定性
- 常规检测的患者样本数
- > 仪器操作者的更替
- ▶ 试剂批号的更换
- ▶ 重新校准

请记住,如果发现了失控问题,它也会影响上个检测批的样本。一旦纠正了该问题,就需要以相反顺序检测上个检测批的样本,直至检测结果与之前结果符合为止。

基于患者安全建立 QC 频率指南或许也是一种方法。此种情况下,我们需要审视可能发生危及患者安全的错误检测结果的全过程。

Parvin 和 Gronowski 两位博士最早关注把患者风险作为 QC 策略设计中的一项性能度量,研究了分析批长度对 QC 性能和 QC 策划过程的影响,提出了将在一个未检出失控条件影响下发出的含有不可接受分析误差的患者结果的平均个数作为评估控制策略有效性的度量。

为说明 SQC 策划与 QC 频率或分析批长度的关系, Parvin 博士介绍了一种 QC 方法, 即"以检出误差所需患者样本的平均个数, 或分析误差超出总允许误差的 患者样本的平均个数, 度量 QC 性能", 提出用最大 E(Nuf) 代表一个未检出失控 误差条件存在期间增加的报告不可接受患者最终结果的个数。

Parvin CA, Gronowski AM. Effect of analytical run length on quality control (QC) performance and the QC planning process. Clin Chem 1997; 43: 2149–54.

在确定合适的 QC 频率时,需要考虑多种因素。建议在开始前,先问自己以下几个正确的问题:

- ▶ 哪些项目相对其他项目更稳定?
- 哪些检测的风险较高 ? 且当结果错误时影响更大 ?
- ➤ 在 QC 评估之间检测的患者样本数 ?
- ▶ QC 评估之间相隔多长时间 ?

只有问出了"正确的"问题,才可能得到"正确的"答案。

遗憾的是,关于检测 QC 的频率,尚无明确的答案。但是,如果你问出了正确的问题,你将能得到正确的答案。你需要保证,为高风险且不稳定的检测以较高频率进行 QC;在检测患者样本的首尾都要进行 QC 评价;要使 QC 评价之间的时间间隔短于对错误结果采取纠正措施所需的时间。

目前,尚未从这些评价中推导出一个简单的计算公式,整个过程依然相当主观。 因此,应综合你实验室采用的其他质量保证手段来确定 QC 频率,究竟该如何做呢?是否有一种确定合适 QC 频率的科学方法?这正是我们要思考和解决的问题!

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关于这一点,不同检测-重复循环可在不同临床情况下应用和评价。

- 对于门诊患者或医生办公室服务,循环评估时间最长可为 2-3 天。
- ▶ 对于非急诊的住院服务,检测重复循环可为 4 小时。
- 对于重症监护服务,化学检测和血气的循环时间可分别缩短至 1 小时和 30 分钟。

尽管尚未有大量关于检测重复循环时间的研究见诸报端,但在多数实验室内可对重复循环时间的特性进行评价。有了这方面的信息,实验室就能策划 QC 频率,确保重复检测结果都会在新的控制检测之后得到确认。

为实现 Q C 的这一目标 ,在某些情况下 ,需要加强 Q C 活动 ,尤其那些按 照 CLIA 要求的最低频率进行 QC 的实验室。对于许多医生办公室,每日 QC 应 当是可以的,但他们可能会考虑将频率减至每周一次。个别医疗结构甚至认为可 将 QC 频率缩减至每月一次。

我们应始终牢记:QC在检出误差的能力上是有局限的。 QC通常无法检出随机的偏移和随机的患者干扰。

除了怀疑检测错误之外,许多重新检测是因为发现了一个失控事件。Delta 检查 也是一种 QC,用于确定患者样本检测结果之间的差异是否符合预期。当得知临 床医生怀疑检测结果有问题时,临床实验室该如何应对,这是临床实验室需要回 答的课题。

综上所述,目前 QC 频率的确定过程依然相当主观,在做出决定时应考虑许多重要变量。虽然统计学方法可帮助评估分析问题和检测设备的可靠性,但仍需要综合所有你用来降低误差的手段来考虑 QC 频率。 制定一份确定 QC 频率的标准检查表或程序,是建立一个经得起质疑的决策流程的基础,以此证明你实验室是如何做出此类直接影响患者后果的决定的。

#### **Acknowledgements:**

此文摘要承蒙上海昆涞生物科技公司 (QuaLab) 的杨卫冲帮忙整理和翻译,谨此致谢!