**Pillar 3: Quality  
Guidance Document on Intended Use of Tools/Resources**

**Note: Any tools and/or resources used from this Toolkit should be adapted for your own laboratory or health system, as appropriate.**

| **Subcategory** | **Name of Document/Tool** | **Description of Document/Tool** | **How to Use this Document/Tool** |
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|  | Quality Overview | Overview of Quality Pillar | Use this presentation to provide an overview of the “Quality” Pillar of the ASCP Negotiation and Advocacy Toolbox. |
|  | Quality Intended Use | Resource for every Toolkit which includes each document included in the toolkit and its potential intended use by end-users | Use this document to better understand the documents and tools in each Toolkit and how they can be used to better advocate for your laboratory’s needs. |
|  | Quality Supplementary References | Useful Quality Pillar Links for publications and websites | The Quality Supplementary Reference document is a set of high-quality, reputable sources that you can refer to in your publications. It could also include websites to enhance the credibility and usefulness of your content. This adds credibility to your arguments and demonstrates that your assertions are backed by reputable sources. |
| Tips and Recommendations | How to use Quality to Advocate for your Lab | Instructional document | Review this reference to identify tools that can be helpful when negotiating and advocating for your lab. |
| Tips and Recommendations | Using Quality Lab Metrics to Justify Staffing | Brief overview of some quality metrics to justify staffing | Using quality metrics to justify staffing involves demonstrating the lab's value, efficiency, and effectiveness to stakeholders. Determine the most relevant quality metrics for your lab. These could include measures such as turnaround time, accuracy rates, customer satisfaction scores, error rates, and compliance with regulatory standards. |
| Advocacy Resources: Quality Tools | Quarterly Quality Report Detailed | Comprehensive, detailed resource | Use for inspections and as a tool to help senior leaders better understand the requirements and efficiency of the laboratory. |
| Advocacy Resources: Quality Tools | Quality Summary | High-level, easy to interpret tool | High-level summary of laboratory quality that can be used to show the value of the laboratory to administrators and other customers. |
| Advocacy Resources: Quality Tools | Laboratory Request Form | Form for requesting Lab support | Use to demonstrate non-revenue, non- volume producing support activities provided by the lab. Note that an Instruction box in the document itself is provided with some useful guidance. This box can be deleted after it is read. |
| Benchmarking | Benchmarking the Lab | Short presentation on how benchmarking can help to identify areas for improvement and best practices. | Determine the key performance indicators (KPIs) and quality metrics that are relevant to your lab's operations. These could include turnaround time, accuracy rates, error rates, cost per test, customer satisfaction scores, and compliance with regulatory standards.  Select Benchmarking Partners: Identify other labs or industry benchmarks that you can use for comparison. These could be similar labs within your organization, competitors, or industry standards established by regulatory agencies or professional organizations.  By benchmarking the lab against industry standards and best practices, you can identify opportunities for improvement, drive performance excellence, and ultimately enhance the quality of lab operations and services. |
| Blood Utilization | Blood Utilization Metrics to Advocate for your Lab | Refers to the management and allocation of blood products within a healthcare setting, typically hospitals or blood transfusion services. It involves the judicious use of blood components such as red blood cells, platelets, and plasma to meet patient needs while minimizing waste and ensuring patient safety. | Develop and follow transfusion guidelines and protocols based on evidence-based medicine, clinical trials, and best practices. These guidelines outline criteria for transfusion initiation, target hemoglobin levels, and appropriate blood product selection based on patient characteristics and clinical scenarios.  By optimizing blood utilization practices, healthcare facilities can improve patient outcomes, reduce healthcare costs, and ensure the efficient use of limited blood resources. |
| Microbiology Quality Metrics | Sample Microbiology Quality Metrics | Examples (references) of microbiology quality metrics to measure in service of laboratory advocacy efforts. | Using microbiology quality metrics to advocate for the lab involves demonstrating the lab's commitment to excellence, accuracy, and patient safety. Quality metrics in microbiology are essential for ensuring the accuracy, reliability, and safety of laboratory processes and results. By leveraging microbiology quality metrics effectively, you can advocate for the lab's value, expertise, and commitment to delivering high-quality diagnostic services that contribute to improved patient care outcomes. |
| Non-Conforming Events | Non-conforming Events to Advocate for your Lab | Presentation and paired informational document on how non-conforming events, also known as deviations or incidents, can be valuable opportunities to advocate for your lab's commitment to quality improvement and patient safety. | Using non-conforming events in the lab to justify staffing, automation, and innovation involves leveraging these incidents as opportunities to improve operational efficiency, enhance quality, and ensure patient safety. By leveraging non-conforming events to justify staffing, automation, and innovation initiatives, you can position the lab as proactive, forward-thinking, and committed to delivering high-quality, reliable results while minimizing the risk of errors and adverse events. |
| Pathology Quality Metrics | Sample Pathology Quality Metrics | Examples (references) of pathology quality metrics to measure in service of laboratory advocacy efforts. | Pathology quality metrics are measurements used to assess the performance and quality of pathology laboratories and their services. These metrics help ensure accurate diagnoses, efficient laboratory operations, and patient safety. |
| Patient and Customer Satisfaction | Patient and Customer Satisfaction Surveys to Advocate for the Lab | Presentation on how patient and customer satisfaction surveys are valuable tools for advocating for the lab. | Using customer satisfaction surveys strategically can indeed be a powerful tool for advocating for the lab. By leveraging customer satisfaction surveys effectively, you can advocate for the lab, attract and retain talent, secure funding, foster innovation, and strengthen the lab's reputation as a provider of high-quality diagnostic services. |
| Percent AM Draws | Phlebotomy AM Draws to Advocate for your Lab  Percent AM Draws to Advocate for your Lab | Informational guide and presentation on how to use data on phlebotomy morning collections and the percentage of AM lab draws to advocate for the lab's efficiency, effectiveness, and patient-centered care. | Highlight the lab's ability to efficiently process morning collections by showcasing data on the number of samples collected and processed during the morning hours. Emphasize the lab's commitment to timely results reporting, which is crucial for supporting patient care decisions early in the day and reducing length-of-stay (LOS). Provide data showing how AM lab draws contribute to reduced wait times for patients, both in terms of scheduling appointments and receiving test results. Emphasize the lab's efforts to optimize workflow and minimize delays, resulting in a smoother and more efficient patient experience. |
| Pre-analytic Quality Metrics | Sample Pre-analytic Quality Metrics to advocate for your lab | Example (reference) of pre-analytic lab quality metrics (dashboards) to measure in service of laboratory advocacy efforts. | Showcase how improvements in pre-analytic processes have led to greater efficiency within the lab. Use metrics such as specimen processing time, turnaround time, and specimen rejection rates to demonstrate how the lab is able to handle a high volume of samples effectively. By effectively leveraging pre-analytic lab quality metrics, you can advocate for the lab's commitment to excellence, attract top talent, secure funding for innovation and quality improvement initiatives, and position the lab as a trusted partner within the healthcare community. |
| Test Utilization | Test Utilization to advocate for Your Lab | Presentation and paired informational guide on how test utilization data can be used for laboratory advocacy efforts. An example dashboard of test utilization metrics for Vitamin-D testing is also provided. | Test utilization is a critical aspect of laboratory management that involves optimizing the selection and utilization of laboratory tests to ensure cost-effective, high-quality patient care.  Highlight how effective test utilization strategies can lead to significant cost savings for the healthcare organization. By reducing unnecessary or inappropriate testing, the lab can minimize expenditures on reagents, supplies, and labor. Present data on cost savings achieved through initiatives such as test stewardship programs or utilization review committees.  Emphasize how test utilization initiatives help optimize the allocation of resources within the lab. By prioritizing high-value tests and reducing unnecessary testing, the lab can streamline workflows, improve turnaround times, and maximize the efficiency of staff and equipment. Illustrate how resource optimization leads to improved productivity and cost-effectiveness. |
| Test Volume and Productivity | Productivity Calculator | Tool to plug your own information into for use | Use to leverage support for additional staffing |
| Test Volume and Productivity | Lab Test Volume and Productivity to Advocate for your Lab | Presentation highlighting the lab's ability to evaluate and leverage test volume and productivity to support laboratory advocacy efforts. | Showcase data on the number of tests performed per day, week, month, or year to illustrate the lab's capacity and throughput. Use lab test volume data to inform capacity planning and resource allocation decisions.   Demonstrate how the lab strategically manages resources, staffing levels, and equipment utilization based on projected test volumes and seasonal variations in demand. Illustrate the lab's ability to scale operations to meet changing needs effectively. Illustrate how high lab test volumes and productivity contribute to cost-effectiveness. Showcase data on economies of scale achieved through increased test volumes, such as reduced per-test costs for reagents, supplies, and labor. Highlight how productivity improvements lead to cost savings and enhanced financial performance for the lab. |
| Turnaround Time | Turnaround time to advocate for the Lab | Presentation demonstration how turnaround time (TAT) can be used as a metric to advocate for your lab. | Emphasize how extended TATs can delay diagnosis and treatment, leading to prolonged patient suffering, increased anxiety, and potentially adverse health outcomes. Provide examples or case studies where delayed test results impacted patient care negatively, such as delayed treatment initiation or missed opportunities for early intervention.  Length-of-Stay (LOS) Reduction: Highlight the correlation between faster TATs and reduced LOS in hospital settings. Faster diagnostic test results enable clinicians to make timely treatment decisions, leading to shorter hospital stays and improved patient flow. Present data or studies demonstrating how optimizing TATs can contribute to LOS reduction and overall healthcare cost savings. |