

EXPLORE CLINICAL LABORATORY CAREERS

Who would be a good fit for the laboratory field?

Someone who loves biology and/or chemistry, likes working with computers, tends to be very analytical and logical and is drawn to healthcare.

What does a clinical laboratory career look like?

Clinical laboratory professionals are the detectives of healthcare, uncovering and providing laboratory information from laboratory analyses that assist physicians in patient diagnosis and treatment, as well as in disease monitoring or prevention (maintenance of health).

Clinical laboratory staff use sophisticated biomedical instrumentation and technology, computers and methods requiring manual dexterity to perform laboratory testing on blood and body fluids. Laboratory testing encompasses such disciplines as clinical chemistry, hematology, immunology, immunohematology, microbiology and molecular biology.

Medical laboratory science professionals generate accurate laboratory data that are needed to aid in detecting cancer, heart attacks, diabetes, infectious mononucleosis and identification of bacteria or viruses that cause infections as well as in detecting drugs of abuse. An estimated 70-80% of all diagnoses and prognoses are determined using laboratory data.

To work in a clinical laboratory as a technician, technologist or clinical laboratory scientist, the majority of laboratories require laboratory certification first.

There are two levels of educational requirements, which follow:

- An MLT (medical laboratory technician) requires an associate's degree with a certain amount of science courses.
- A CLS (previously MT, or clinical laboratory scientist) requires a Bachelor of Science degree with an emphasis in biology and chemistry.

Is this field right for you?

Do some job shadowing for a day or more.

Ask those in the department about what they do.

*A full-time student can typically complete the laboratory internships or clinical rotations in one calendar year.

Want to learn more? Job shadow at Phelps Health.

<https://ahec.activehosted.com/f/53>