

QUALITY MATTERS

No 36, April 2007

Our Micro Consultant

To increase the confidence that our customers feel in our services – including back-up consultants – we print this picture of our Micro consultant, the venerable Dr Errol Gove. He has two excuses for dressing this way:

1. It was a holiday day
2. He comes from Pretoria



Freight problems cause heat

Sometimes parcels go places they're not meant to go. We are concerned and are looking at more efficient freighting. But if you get a hot box of samples, give us a call. We will log the error and recommend what action will follow. Don't forget as a SANAS accredited company, we have conducted stability trials and KNOW how stable our material is. Delays in freighting do not always mean a new box of samples. And, whatever else you do, NEVER send a box back to us. We will not re-use it and will only throw it out anyway. For those sceptical and scientific – we will happily send you another box IF you agree to analyse its samples as well as those in the hot box. This will give us even more useful stability data.

By Dr Jim McCulloch

Toilet Humour

The following is from a sign seen in a gent's toilet in a lab building in Durban. The toilet is three stories up and there is no way anyone could scale the face-brick wall.

Due to the informal settlement problem in this area, please do not open the windows.

I suppose being homeless means you are desperate – and highly enterprising!

But my all time favourite sign appears on a lab wall in northern KZN – and I still don't know if it's a typo of brilliant humour.

Haemithology Department

Making it up as they go along, perhaps?

Tight ranges

We have a good document that describes the way we do stats and how to interpret our reports. One issue thought that keeps on coming up is when a lab sees apparent poor performance – most often on Instrument Stats – and phones for help. Generally, this is due to very tight ranges for Instrument Stats SDs. Think about it: every single person in that database is using the same instrument, calibrator and reagent so it is not surprising that the stats are tight. Check the real figures in the box beneath the Levey-Jennings charts, e.g. the number of results and the SDs. And if you are still not sure, give us a call. And ask for the interpretation document from Marlize.

Web site

Don't forget to use our web site regularly – it costs us a fortune to run. No, seriously, we pack it with all sorts of goodies, many with CEU/ CPD points, as well as articles like *What to do if your EQA is poor*. Also the more practical elements like enrolment forms, acceptable CVs and so on.

Final thought

If at first you don't succeed, maybe you are totally doff.

S A N A S



PROFICIENCY
TESTING

Accredited to ISO Guide 43 & ILAC G13