

## **June 2017 - Announcement of Health Standards Organization/Accreditation Canada for MLT Educational Programs**

On January 22, 2016, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) announced that it was divesting of the responsibility for the assessment and accreditation of health education programs, including MLT training programs offered by the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT), and the University of Alberta by February 1, 2018. Accreditation is a process that ensures educational programs are delivering quality education and producing graduates that meet pre-defined national standards of entry-to-practice competence. The provincial regulatory bodies, including the CMLTA rely on the accreditation process as a standard to approve the educational programs; therefore, enabling graduates to be issued a practice permit and license to practice in the profession. Accreditation serves to protect the interest of the public by defining standards for educational programs and ensuring compliance with those standards within Canada.

The Allied Health Program Accreditation Working Group (Working Group) is a not-for-profit working group representing the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists, Canadian Association of Physician Assistants, Canadian Society of Cardiology Technologists, Canadian Society of Clinical Perfusion, Canadian Society of Ophthalmic Medical Personnel, Paramedic Association of Canada, Sonography Canada, The Canadian Orthoptic Society, the Alliance of Medical Radiation Technologists of Canada, and the Canadian Association of Allied Health Programs. This Working Group has been actively involved in the selection process for a new accreditation services provider. The CMLTA is pleased to announce that the Health Standards Organization (HSO) and its affiliate, Accreditation Canada (AC), have been selected as the new third-party provider to replace the CMA for accreditation services for MLT education institutions.

The HSO specializes in the development of best-in-class standards, innovative assessment methodologies, and practical activation services and tools. The HSO is responsible for the development of standards as well as the design of the fully automated web-based platform for the EQual™ Canada Program. The AC plans and provides accreditation services to Canadian and international clients, with a focus on what is relevant in their local context. The AC is responsible for the implementation and operations of the accreditation program.

As a sponsor of accreditation services, the CMLTA is actively involved in prescribing requirements for Alberta MLT training programs related to the CMLTA, such as requiring new MLT graduates to have knowledge of the *Health Professions Act*, the *Medical Laboratory Technologists Profession Regulation*, and the CMLTA Standards of Practice/Code of Ethics. Sponsorship also includes CMLTA participation in on-site accreditation inspections of the education institutions.