

Lupus Anticoagulant Testing: remarkable observations in ECAT surveys.

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The Lupus Anticoagulant module is one of the largest modules in the external quality assessment (EQA) programme of the ECAT Foundation. Today more than 400 laboratories take part in this EQA survey. When a strong positive lupus anticoagulant is distributed the vast majority of the participants perform a correct classification of the sample. However, when a weakly positive sample is distributed a more heterozygeneous pattern in the classification can be observed. When evaluating several surveys using a weakly positive patient sample 15 – 30% of the participants classified such a sample as lupus negative. In addition, 10 – 20% classified the sample as borderline and 45 – 70% classified the samples as positive (positive includes the categories weakly positive, positive and strongly positive). With respect to this observation on the classification of weakly positive lupus samples the following questions will be addressed in the presentation:

1. Is there a relationship with the number of test panels applied?
2. Is there a relationship with the test selection?
3. Is there a relationship with the test results observed?

In survey 2009-4 and 2010-1 the same Lupus Inhibitor Control Low sample of Technoclone was distributed. Only about 60% of the participants gave the same classification in both surveys. Twenty-one per cent of the participants gave in the 2010-1 survey a classification of a higher order than in the 2009-4 survey, while 18% gave a classification of a lower order. In the presentation this phenomenon is further discussed.