

Gold Book: The Laboratory Portfolio

“Pathological testing and laboratories in India is still an unorganized sector”

**Girish Mehta, President
Wellspring**



Girish Mehta, President and SBU Head, Wellspring, is a product of IIT Mumbai and IIM Kolkata. Mr Mehta has a rich experience of over 17 years in the industry. He started his career in marketing,

followed by management consultancy, and then took up the challenge of establishing Wellspring. Under his leadership, Wellspring has grown to one of the largest chain of Diagnostic centres in India.

What are your views on the importance and application of laboratory information management system and laboratory automation?

All our labs are connected through the 21st Century Health Management Solutions LABNET.

The 21st Century Health LABNET provides vital information such as, number of tests conducted, consumption of reagents, sales figures, and various other kinds of relevant information. Thus, in addition to managing the traceable quality, the quality of samples is also ensured.

By bar coding the sample in front of the patient, the interchanging of samples or other related errors are avoided.

Screen based authentication and computerized worksheets are some of the steps taken by us to improve efficiency of the LIS. Ninety- five percent of our tests are executed through automated and fully computerized systems.

However, some tests such as histopathology testing have to be done manually. We have invested approximately Rs. 3 crore on this project.

A major obstacle in the efficient implementation of such a system is resistance by users who have not been exposed to working by wire. Many of them do not know how to use a computer efficiently and have to be trained. Automated systems can significantly improve the efficiency. Without an LIS, it is impossible to work on 300-400 samples in a day.

Wellspring

Information management system

Wellspring has invested huge resources in developing a customized information management system. Its LIS, provided by 21st Century Health Management Solutions is linked with marketing, billing, finance, accounts, and inventory management system, and gives valuable inputs on a real time basis besides automating the whole testing process.

“An LIS provides connectivity, networking, drives quality, and reduces the turnaround time”

Dr. Vandana Lal, ED
Dr. Lal PathLabs Pvt Ltd



Dr. Vandana Lal, Executive Director, Dr. Lal PathLabs Pvt. Ltd., has been awarded with various prestigious awards and recognitions for her outstanding contribution in the field of pathology. She was honored with the 'Shiromani Award for Excellence' and the 'International Business Council Award' in 1993. In 1994, Dr. Vandana Lal has honored with the "Gem of India" award by the All India Achiever's Conference. The American Biographical Institute has honored Dr. Lal as "Woman of the Year" 2001.

Kindly comment on laboratory information management system in India.

Laboratory information management system (LIS) is extremely crucial for big labs, especially when you are running multiple labs because networking gives you control of these labs.

These systems help in identifying the type of patients, and tests that are being ordered at each lab location. Quality control becomes more efficient with the quality control module attached to the LIS. As a result, instruments can be connected even at a distance, say 2000 kilometers. An LIS provides connectivity, networking, drives quality, and reduces the turnaround time. Patients can be registered online and reports can be printed remotely. IT is definitely going to play a very big role in medicine in the future.

"Investment in the best equipment and reagents ensures prompt turn around"

Dr Sanjeev K Chaudhry, CEO SRL Ranbaxy Ltd



Dr. Sanjeev K Chaudhry is presently Chief Executive Officer of SRL Ranbaxy Limited and Chairman of CSC Nutrigenomics Pte. Limited, Singapore. He also serves on the Board of Directors of several companies in India and abroad. Dr. Chaudhry was the South Asia Head of DuPont Solae until June 2006, a position he held for eleven years. He has a PhD in Business Administration from Columbia University, US, and holds a university record for Masters in Economics at Panjab University, Chandigarh.

During 1985-88, he was the head of corporate planning at RJR Nabisco/Britannia and following that President and CEO (1990-95) of NatOleo (a Johor Corp. company). NatOleo is world's largest producer of fatty acids and glycerin and was set up as a greenfield project by Dr Chaudhry.

Dr. Chaudhry is a visiting faculty to several leading management institutes and universities around the world. He writes guest columns for magazines and has authored three books on value education and management.

What are your views on LIS as well as laboratory automation and bar coding?

Our claim of having the best lab information management system has been established and validated by many agencies around the world. This year, we have received the Frost and Sullivan Award for the best participatory role in using information technology and managing health information.

Our CIO, Mr. Radhakrishna Pillai received an award in Delhi for innovative use of information management and IT in managing data. We report 5 million (50 lakh) lab tests annually. Thus, we have a large scale operation and the LIS plays a crucial role. We are probably the first lab in the country to look at digitalization of records so that they can be retrieved for a longer period of time.

"Any laboratory not having proper information technology systems is bound to be doomed"

**Dr. Sushil Shah, Chairman
Metropolis Health Services (I) Ltd**



Dr. Sushil Shah, the founder and Chairman of Metropolis Health Services (I) Ltd., was a Pioneer in setting up India's very first referral laboratory way back in 1981. Before Metropolis, Dr. Shah has had successful stints in various hospitals like Breach Candy, Cumballa Hill, Sir H.N Hospital, and Saifee Hospital as the Chief Pathologist.

His corporate associations with the major Indian pharmaceutical companies have made his name one to reckon with in the field of medical diagnostics. He was earlier the Technical Director of Zyclus Cadilla and Executive Director (Diagnostic Division) of Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Limited. Dr Shah completed his MD (Pathology and Bacteriology) in 1975 from the Grant Medical College in Mumbai. He has published many research papers in the field of 'Tumor Malignancies,' 'Fetal Sex,' 'Pulmonary Tuberculosis Chlamydia,' and 'Detection of Taxoplasma Gondii.' A research fellow of the Cornell Medical Center, New York, in 1978, Dr. Shah has been at the forefront of introducing many radical innovations in diagnostic medicine in India.

What is the importance of a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)?

Today, no organization can survive without a proper information management system. This system deals with: patient entry, tracking of samples, ensuring that samples do not get mixed up, bar-coding of the samples, and ensuring that samples coming from outside the city are being handled and labeled properly. All this becomes much easier with the use of information technology. It is a very crucial cog. Any laboratory system not having proper information technology systems is bound to be doomed.

We are getting our LIMS developed by Price Water House Cooper. This software is going to be marketed by them internationally and is going to be one of the best LIM systems in the world. It is going to be affiliated with SAP and will enable us to trace our sample at every level, wherever it is. This system has already been installed at Mumbai as a trial run. By October this year, it will be operational in Mumbai. Subsequently, we will be taking it to all our other laboratories. Hopefully, by the end of this year we should have it in almost 70 percent of our laboratories. In addition, by beginning of the next year, it should be in place all across our network.

"Laboratory automation has not been completely understood by the Indian medical community"

**Dr. A. Velumani, MD
Thyrocare Technologies Ltd**



Dr. A. Velumani, Managing Director, Thyrocare Technologies Ltd., is a scientist from Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). After a stint in research on thyroid, he risked his secure job at the Centre, invested his provident fund amount of Rs.1 lakh to establish a private lab, testing blood samples for thyroid disorders, in 1996.

What is the importance of a laboratory information management system (LIS)?

LIS should be the backbone of laboratories in the current scenario. Avoiding these systems would result in sheer extinction. A computer in a laboratory without powerful software is of no use. LIS do more than just generate reports. An appropriate system assists the management through relevant information, helps improve quality, improves the speed of reporting and is overall vital. □