

Update on Cytometry Certification Market Analysis
October 15, 2009

Working together, ISAC and CCS, under the sponsorship of the Wallace H. Coulter Foundation, recently completed a survey of its members and other interested parties to assess the level of interest in a program of certification in cytometry. The response was outstanding—we got nearly 800 responses back, and we'd like to thank everyone who participated. The breadth of the response was impressive. Nearly half of the responses came from outside the US, with more than 50 countries represented. Respondents came from hospitals, universities, industry, and government, and included basic scientists, both translational and clinical researchers, and clinical practitioners.

The main conclusion of this survey, made not by us but by Professional Examination Services, the organization that conducted the survey, is that there is very strong support for a certification program. This support was seen both in the internationally irrespective of location and among all subgroups of people practicing cytometry in different capacities. Moreover, while the data are still being analyzed, there appears to be a core of material that all cytometrists need to know, no matter where they work or what they work on. This core body of knowledge can form the basis of a certification program.

Another point that became clear from the survey is that you as members want to see our societies involved in this effort; more than 90% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the implementation of a cytometry certification program was part of the role of ISAC and CCS. We hear you, and plan to pursue this aggressively. Our next step is to conduct what is known in the trade as a role delineation study. Over the next weeks some of you may be contacted with a request to participate in that study, which is designed to determine, in detail, what it is that cytometrists know, and what it is they do. The results of this study will allow us to put together a set of competencies that define our discipline, and then begin constructing the kind of an examination a candidate for certification would have to complete. We'll keep you posted as this process proceeds.

Mike Borowitz, President, CCS and Bob Murphy, President, ISAC