

## **HIV Serology EQAS**

In India, under the National AIDS Control Programme, National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) has established more than 5000 laboratories to carry out diagnosis of HIV infection. HIV infection is routinely diagnosed by detecting HIV antibodies using tests like ELISAs and Rapid tests based on various principles. To monitor the performance of these laboratories, a three tier system has been established where all the testing centers (ICTCs) have been grouped under different State Reference Laboratories (SRLs). The SRLs are grouped under different National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) and NRLs come under an Apex Laboratory. At present there are 13 NRLs, 117 SRLs and around 5,000 ICTCs within this network throughout the country and ICMR- NARI functions as an Apex Laboratory. ICMR-NARI is also a National Reference Laboratory and sends panels to 18 SRLs from three states – Goa, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

HIV Serology EQAS is conducted twice a financial year wherein Apex laboratory (ICMR-NARI) sends proficiency panels to 12 NRLs and 18 SRLs. In addition to NRLs & SRLs the PT Unit is also open to private laboratories involved in HIV testing. The private laboratories have to register in the EQAS programme on payment basis.

The dully filled registration form can be sent to the PT provider address (by email) before the commencement of round. Please read the instructions carefully before filling up the form. The first round will be conducted in the month of June-July and second round in the month of December-January.