

CD4 EQAS

CD4 count is being used as a marker of disease progression in HIV infection. It is also used to decide when to initiate anti-retroviral therapy and to monitor the effect of ART. Hence, it is of utmost importance that the testing laboratory could provide accurate and reproducible CD4 count for making correct decisions in clinical settings. Participation in EQA for CD4+ T cell count provides the means to attain the goals and objectives of the laboratory, identifies the needs and expectations of customers and determines means of preventing nonconformities.

NACO established EQAS for CD4 count estimation for the laboratories linked to NACO ART centers. ICMR-National AIDS Research Institute (NARI) functions as an apex laboratory for conducting the EQAS for all these centers.

ICMR-NARI is conducting the CD4 EQAS activity in India since 2005 and currently 450 laboratories under National network are enrolled for this. Two, six monthly rounds are conducted in a year usually in the months of February–March, October – November. Since 2015, this activity has been extended to the Private laboratories also on payment basis. The Laboratories willing to participate in this program have to enroll by sending the registration form. The participation fees for each round is Rs. 12500/-