



Responsible management as a fit clinical microbiologist

Sunjoo Kim

*Department of Laboratory Medicine,
Gyeongsang National University School of Medicine, Jinju, Korea*

General qualities to become a fit clinical microbiologist would be good interpersonal and communication skills, curiosity, flexibility, and good prioritizing skills. Well-organized educational and training system would be necessary for the young trainees like residents to become a skillful clinical microbiologist. There are innumerable roles as a responsible manager in the clinical microbiology laboratory, such as daily review of laboratory report, interpretative report, and consult to the physicians. As a key member of hospital infection control team, active participation to prevent hospital-associated infections would be required. A suitable clinical microbiologist should be highly interested in active surveillance cultures, environmental cultures, detection of outbreaks, and incidence of multi-drug resistant organisms. Annual report of antibiotic resistance statistics, newsletter for rising pathogens, close communication with infectious disease specialists, medical technicians, and infection control nurses would be necessary. Setting new technologies, such as real-time PCR, MALDI-TOF, DNA sequencing, full microbiology laboratory automation, and next generation sequencing would be considered in the near future. Good response for the consult request and extended consulting time would elevate the value of clinical microbiologist. Life-long research for the several topics will make him or her a specialist in that area. Collaboration with people working in another institute will widen and deepen the research field. Collecting nationwide data will make the paper more representative. Again, communication and interpersonal skills are so important for the collaboration. An adequate clinical microbiologist may improve himself or herself and get new information by active participation in the academy meetings, workshops, and educations. Monthly review of documents for the quality management and preparation for the accreditation would be helpful to maintain and improve the quality of the laboratory. As a teacher, we need to educate other people, such as doctors, nurses, medical technicians, and students, by which they may understand the laboratory procedures and data better. Especially sample collection and transport is important in the clinical microbiology laboratory regardless of innovation of new techniques.

In conclusion, well-organized training system should be established to make a fit clinical microbiologist. Active participation for the hospital-associated infection control and keen laboratory data review and interpretative report will be necessary. Collaboration with other specialists is important.