# QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT IN ELECTRODIAGNOSTIC STUDIES

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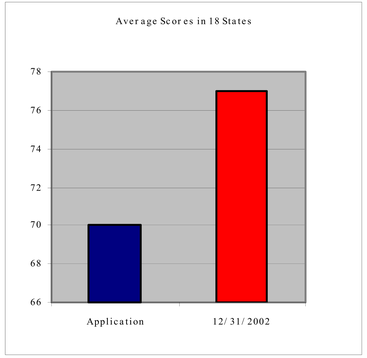
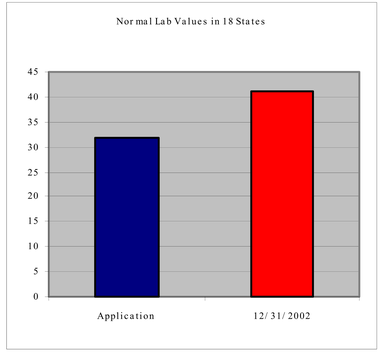
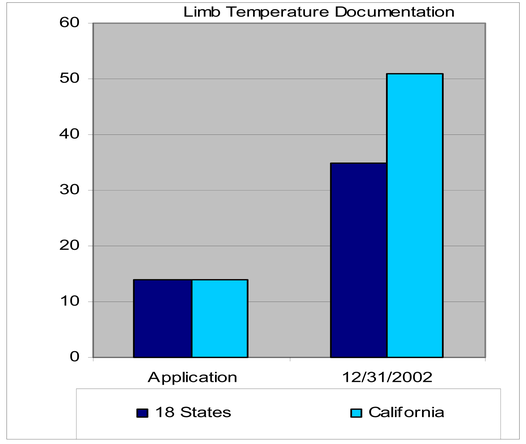
**Introduction:** One Call Medical (OCM) is the nation's leading diagnostic provider network for MRI/CT and EMG for the Workers' Compensation industry. EMG and NCS Services began in May 1999 using the AAEM Recommended Policy for Electrodiagnostic Medicine as the standard for EMG and NCS Reports.

**Objectives:** To determine the effect of a required documentation format with ongoing education in improving quality of EMG and NCS reports during the past four years.

**Methods:** 1,023 physician electromyographers who applied for network admission were selected for review. Quality indicators were identified, including content, format, and temperature control, to measure adherence to AAEM documentation standards for EMG and NCS reports. Each report was graded by a group of board certified physician electromyographers, receiving a score of 0 to 100.




**Results:** The average score of electromyographers reviewed on application during this period was 70. Following admission to the network, physician scores have risen to 77. Only 14% of applicants originally documented limb temperature during NCS. Through educational communication, this number rose to 35% overall and to 51% in California. A smaller improvement was identified for the inclusion of normal NCS values in the report (from 32% to 41%).

**Conclusions:** A substantial number of physician electromyographers applying for network admission in eighteen states do not adhere to AAEM Guidelines. Our results indicate education through an EMG network using AAEM guidelines can complement the educational efforts of the AAEM to improve the quality of EMG and NCS, although there is clearly a need for further research in this important area.

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