

# **Association of Public Health Laboratories**

Strategic Plan 2010-2013



# about aphl

The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) works to safeguard the public's health by strengthening public health laboratories in the United States and globally. APHL advances the development of laboratory systems and practices, and promotes policies that support healthy communities. The association's members include state and local public health laboratories, state environmental and agricultural laboratories, and other government laboratories that conduct testing of public health significance. Individuals with an interest in public health laboratory science and practice also participate in the association. APHL is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization with a history of over fifty years.

## **VISION**

A healthier world through quality laboratory practice.

## **MISSION**

To promote the role of public health laboratories in shaping national and global health objectives, and to promote policies, programs and technologies, which assure continuous improvement in the quality of laboratory practice and health outcomes.

# preamble

The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) works to provide state and local laboratories serving the public's health with the resources and infrastructure to protect the health of US residents and to prevent and control disease globally. The following four-year strategic plan for APHL (January 2010 through December 2013) delineates priorities consonant with this mission, expanding upon goals identified in the association's 2006-2009 plan.

References in this plan to "public health laboratories" or "laboratories serving the public's health" encompass all state and local institutions that conduct laboratory testing of public health significance.

# workforce

**Advance the training, leadership development, recruitment and retention of a competent workforce to meet the needs of the public health laboratory system.**

## **LABORATORY DIRECTOR SUCCESSION**

Provide tools to support succession planning and the selection of public health laboratory directors and continue to train newly appointed directors.

## **LABORATORY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Continue to identify, develop and train emerging leaders through the National Center for Public Health Laboratory Leadership, the Fellowship programs and other initiatives.

## **PROMOTE LABORATORY CAREERS**

Continue to promote public health laboratory careers through strategic partnerships, public policy, advocacy, marketing and targeted outreach.

## **WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION**

Provide members best compensation practices and the data required to develop and advocate for appropriate and competitive compensation levels.

## **TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Maintain and enhance the development, implementation and evaluation of training and professional development opportunities.

# advocacy & outreach

**Enhance the visibility, status and influence of the public health laboratory community through effective advocacy, strategic communications and public relations.**

## **ADVOCACY FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY COMMUNITY**

- ▶ Develop and implement annual prioritized advocacy plans for APHL and its members that assist in securing funding for the laboratory community from diverse federal agencies.
- ▶ Proactively shape regulatory policy and legislation. Inform legislators, policy makers and stakeholders.

## **STRATEGIC OUTREACH**

Provide a unified voice on issues that impact the public health laboratory community, conduct strategic outreach to build effective relationships, and encourage partners and others to meet the needs of members.

## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- ▶ Promote the roles and contributions of public health laboratories and laboratorians to the public, media, policy makers, funders and other external constituencies.
- ▶ Implement a strategic communications plan to support the objectives outlined in the Association's strategic plan.

## **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

Ensure that policy priorities are established and that Association positions are developed and communicated in a timely manner.

# networking & community building

**Act as a focal point for the collection and dissemination of information throughout the community and to external partners.**

## **COMMUNITY COORDINATION**

- ▶ Facilitate the flow of information to, and collaboration among, members and external partners.
- ▶ Continue to refine and institutionalize internal coordination procedures that enable APHL and its members to respond appropriately to public health events.
- ▶ Implement social networking tools as appropriate to facilitate community building and networking.

## **KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

- ▶ Communicate best practices and provide members with tools to derive and disseminate explicit and tacit knowledge.
- ▶ Provide information and access to information relevant to the public health laboratory practice.

## **NATIONAL LABORATORY SYSTEM INITIATIVE**

Support continued development of an integrated network of public and private laboratories to assure the quality and coordination of testing.

# informatics

**Improve the informatics capabilities of APHL and its members.**

## **LABORATORY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LIMS)**

Provide the information, tools and training to support members in their ability to implement and sustain a comprehensive, state-of-the art LIMS that meets national standards. Ensure input into, and provide support for, the next generation of LIMS.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

- ▶ Coordinate the participation of and share best practices among public health laboratories in the development of national and regional health information exchanges.
- ▶ Collaborate on establishing governance and common standards for health information exchanges.
- ▶ Lead the establishment of governance and common standards for electronic laboratory data exchange.
- ▶ Position public health as a critical component of the National Health Information Network (NHIN).

# laboratory science, standards & practices

Advance the development, use and evaluation of technologies, quality systems and practices.

## **ADDRESSING GAPS**

- ▶ Develop and disseminate practice guidelines in collaboration with other partners.
- ▶ Identify, prioritize and address gaps in public health laboratory practice.

## **LABORATORY SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

- ▶ Identify emerging technologies for possible transfer and use in public health.
- ▶ Participate in, and provide subject matter expertise for, activities involving the development, implementation, training and ongoing support of laboratory technologies for use in public health.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

Expand the implementation of the Laboratory Systems Improvement Program (LSIP) and continue to support performance improvement.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Develop and implement a first-stage voluntary accreditation process.

## **OUTCOMES & EFFECTIVENESS**

Enhance the ability of member laboratories to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of their work.

## **CONSULTATION**

Provide expert consultation and assistance domestically and internationally as requested.

## **QUALITY SYSTEMS**

Represent member interest in national and international forums related to regulatory and voluntary standards, and promote the use and implementation of quality systems.

**Assure that APHL has the infrastructure, resources and partnerships to accomplish its mission.**

## **FUNDING**

Secure funding to meet the priorities of the strategic plan.

## **HUMAN CAPITAL**

- ▶ Ensure sufficient staff resources to achieve the work of the strategic plan.
- ▶ Increase the number of members participating in association activities through promotion, outstanding service and opportunities for meaningful contribution.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

- ▶ Increase the value and maintain satisfaction of APHL membership and communicate this value to members and prospects.
- ▶ Expand APHL membership across all categories and retain existing members.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

- ▶ Systematically review Association programs to evaluate their contributions to the objectives in this strategic plan.
- ▶ Enhance the Association's continuous quality improvement efforts.

## **PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION**

Actively seek out and maintain partnerships with public and private organizations to enhance the Association's capacity to fulfill its mission and support the public health and the broader health communities.

## **PRODUCTS & SERVICES**

Continue to develop, diversify and market APHL's product line.

# about public health laboratories

A public health laboratory is a local, state or federal governmental entity serving a defined population and integrated into the broader public health system. It provides testing for public health programs in assessing health status and preventing disease. In addition, it fulfills core public health functions in partnership with private clinical, hospital and commercial laboratories, other institutions and health care organizations.



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