

Infectious Diseases Program

The Infectious Diseases Program at APHL strives to improve knowledge and utilization of quality laboratory practices related to infectious disease testing, and to inform legislation and policy that affect laboratory practice. As diseases emerge and new tests are developed, staff members provide rapid communication and technical assistance to member laboratories. The Infectious Disease Committee addresses current issues faced by the public health community, including regulatory compliance, utilization of proper testing algorithms, emerging infectious disease threats, and biosafety/biosecurity.

APHL and CDC collaborate to develop programs and activities that strengthen public health infectious disease laboratory infrastructure. This enables public health laboratories to prepare and respond efficiently to infectious disease outbreaks and emerging diseases.

APHL works closely with its members and partners to assess public health laboratory capability and capacity. Surveys help identify and address public health laboratory needs and practice gaps. Additionally, APHL works to develop, implement, and support the use of laboratory technologies in a public health setting.

APHL and CDC aim to sustain quality and consistent laboratory practices to protect the health of the nation. The resources, expertise, and guidance provided ensure that public health laboratories have the capacity to respond to emerging and other infectious disease threats.

In order to promote, discuss, define and explain the unique challenges faced by public health laboratories, APHL works to:

- Obtain and rapidly move critical response information to the public health laboratory community
- Deliver laboratory training workshops, teleconferences, and distance learning products relevant to infectious disease testing
- Convene committees and expert panels to address relevant infectious disease issues
- Convene national conferences on infectious disease topics as needed

Ultimately, these activities will support the improvement of Infectious Disease laboratory practice.

Other specific activities this year include:

- Monthly conference calls with the Infectious Disease Committee and CDC partners
- Collaborate with CDC Dengue Branch to establish a best practice algorithm for dengue testing and promote quality diagnostic testing
- Disseminate a report on antimicrobial susceptibility testing capacity in public health laboratories
- Submit comments on FDA guidance of RUO/IUO product use in public health laboratories

Links:

- <http://www.aphl.org/aphlprograms/infectious/pages/default.aspx>
- <http://www.aphl.org/policy/facts/pages/default.aspx>
- <http://www.aphl.org/aphlprograms/infectious/Documents/TranslationalResearchGreenPaper.pdf>

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