



# PHLIP

## (Public Health Laboratory Interoperability Project)

### Origin Story

The Public Health Laboratory Interoperability Project (PHLIP) was launched in 2006 to improve information sharing between public health laboratories (PHLs) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This national collaboration was born out of a dire need to ensure all public health entities spoke the same language and communicated standardized information, despite the use of different systems and technologies.

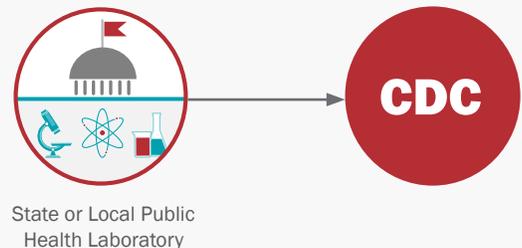
The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) established its Technical Assistance program to facilitate and convene the PHLIP network. The program provided guidelines for using a common vocabulary, built capacity around Electronic Test Orders and Results, piloted data exchange architecture solutions and established a process to help labs increase their messaging capability.

What began as a modest pilot community of six trading partners for influenza-specific data has evolved into a network comprising hundreds of partners. Together, they enable the fast and accurate exchange of standardized data for more than a dozen use cases. This is a major advantage for public health reporting, planning and responding to emerging health threats.

### How It Works

PHLIP's driving mission is to encourage interoperability between systems in the public health sphere, including computers, networks, operating systems and applications, to seamlessly and quickly exchange information. Similar to the way bank ATMs came to accept all debit cards, PHLIP is capable of accepting information from all PHL systems thanks to a universally adopted, standardized format.

A team of terminologists and system architects works with local laboratorians—as well as regulatory and standards-developing organizations—to maintain connections to the PHLIP data feed and make sure laboratory tests and results use standard vocabularies and terminology.



### COVID-19 Response

As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in the United States, the public health community directed state labs to send their COVID-19 data to CDC using the PHLIP data exchange feed.

To make this happen, APHL worked with public health leaders to create new vocabulary for an existing messaging format. APHL did in weeks what would normally take months: ensure the adoption of standardized language and enable various platforms to exchange, consume and understand the data. Through PHLIP, 58 state and territory public health labs were sending COVID-19 testing data to CDC by March 26.

Because the vocabulary is test and device specific, APHL continues to work on refining COVID-19 messages as labs adopt new tests.

### Additional Reading

[Public Health Laboratory Interoperability Project \(PHLIP\) Overview](#)

[www.aphl.org/COVID19-data](http://www.aphl.org/COVID19-data)

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