

APHL CRISIS RESPONSE IN ACTION

MAY 2021



APHL'S ROLE IN CRISIS RESPONSE

APHL works closely with federal agencies to develop and execute national health initiatives. During public health emergencies, APHL provides leadership and scientific guidance and operates as a coordinating center for laboratory response. The organization's members—state, local, tribal and territorial governmental, laboratories—are at the forefront of detecting novel threats and respond to all-hazard threats. A successful public health response depends on well-prepared networks which utilize:

- Crisis Management Practices
- Data to Inform Response
- Timely Communications
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Sound Science
- Shared Expertise

APHL has activated its Incident Command System to support member laboratories in responses for public health threats such as Ebola, Zika, opioids, vaping-associated lung injury (EVALI), and most recently, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). APHL also works internationally to build effective laboratory systems and expand access to diagnostic testing services.

LABORATORY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR RESPONSE TO PUBLIC HEALTH CRISES COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

APHL has a longstanding role in public health emergency response. The organization's resources and proven systems can be deployed rapidly to assist public health systems in a time of need. In December 2018, APHL was awarded a \$16.7 million, two-year cooperative agreement by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Center for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support. The cooperative agreement is being used to expedite recovery for public health laboratories and other essential public health systems in Houston (TX), Puerto Rico and United States Virgin Islands, jurisdictions impacted by the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season.

APHL is supporting recovery in the following areas:

Procurement

- Expedited procurement
- Existing relationships with vendors

Human Resource Capacity

- Rapid recruitment of personnel
- Systems for staffing management

Technical Assistance

- Expertise across the laboratory system

Travel Logistics

- Systems to support local and long-distance travel requests

ABOUT APHL

The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) works to strengthen laboratory systems serving the public's health in the United States and globally. APHL represents state, local, tribal, and territorial governmental health laboratories in the United States. Its members, known as "public health laboratories," monitor, detect and respond to all-hazards threats.

ABOUT THE PPHR PROGRAM

APHL's Public Health Preparedness and Response (PHPR) program strengthens public health laboratories' response to biological, chemical, radiological threats and natural disasters through partnerships and outreach, technical assistance, development of trainings and tools, biosafety and biosecurity initiatives and crisis management assistance.



The APHL PPHR Team (left to right): Samuel Abrams, Sean Page, Jill Sutton, Chris Mangal, Tyler Wolford, Michael Marsico. Not pictured: Stephanie Barahona.

IMPACT: REBUILDING PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS

- ▶ **Puerto Rico: Hired 52 positions** | **US Virgin Islands: Hired 13 positions**
- ▶ **Procured \$4.7 million** in supplies, equipment and support services from over **1,200 vendors** between all three jurisdictions.
- ▶ **Ratified 10 contracts** totaling over **\$5.6 million** in obligated funds. Activities included: Restoration of a molecular laboratory's infrastructure that was damaged during hurricanes Irma and Maria, development of a public health data repository, implementation of a laboratory information management system, support of video directly observed therapy for tuberculosis patients and a sample drone transport study.
- ▶ **Supported travel for 20 staff** from PR and USVI to attend conferences and trainings for professional development. An additional **7 staff** from both jurisdictions were supported with local travel to implement hurricane recovery activities.

This report was 100% funded with federal funds from a federal program of \$16,787,477. This publication was supported by Cooperative Agreement #NU1ROT000009 from CDC. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC.

