The Yardstick: It’s More Than Just Three Feet...

Tim Monson, M.S., on behalf of APHL and the Yardstick Task Force

2014 APHL Annual Meeting

June 3, 2014
Do you know what this is and for what purpose it is used?

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Do you know what this is and for what purpose it is used?

Yardstick Self Assessment Tool for Public Health Food Safety Testing

Enter username and password to login

Username:
Password:

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REQUEST ACCESS FORM

Select Lab Name:
State or Territory:
Enter your Email:
Type of lab:
- State Public Health Laboratory
- Local Public Health Laboratory
- Agricultural Laboratory
- State Chemist Laboratory

Submit

Below is a list of labs that already have access. Each lab can only be activated once.

- Active Labs --
2013 APHL Annual Meeting

The Yardstick: It's More Than Just Three Feet...It's a Comprehensive, Web-Based Food Safety Self Assessment Tool for Public Health Laboratories and Their Food Safety Systems

T. Monson1, D. Boxrud1, K. Larson2, and Y. Salting1

1 Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene, 2 Minnesota Department of Health, Public Health Laboratory, 3 Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), 4 APHL emeritus member, Denver, CO

ABSTRACT (Updated)

PURPOSE: The Yardstick Self-Assessment Tool for Public Health Laboratories is designed to serve as a "gold standard", a "yardstick", that clinical, environmental, and agricultural public health laboratories (PHLs) can use to measure their overall capability, capacity, and effectiveness of their food safety (FS) systems.

TOOL DESIGN: Under the auspices of the Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreaks Response (CIFOR), APHL contracted six subject matter experts in the clinical, environmental, and agricultural public health laboratory fields to develop a comprehensive FS self-assessment tool. Areas assessed within the tool include laboratory testing, data management, communication and coordination with partners and administration organization. The format of the Yardstick self-assessment tool is multi-select, with best practices for all areas and areas (foodborne pathogens, chemicals, toxins, and radiation) of foodborne illness testing. The tool includes detailed recommendations and guidelines for each section, as well as comprehensive assessment questions weighted to allow users to prioritize laboratory or system gaps. Questions were compared with other public health and FS publications, surveys and guidelines that measure FS system effectiveness to ensure that the Yardstick is a comprehensive assessment tool for all laboratories.

YARDSTICK TOOL WORK GROUP

- John Fantone (Connecticut), Dr. Katherine A. Kelley (Connecticut), Maxine Moncure (Maryland), William W. Hintz (Illinois Laboratory), Heather Green (formerly APHL, Food Safety), and Bill Aune (Minneapolis), Minnesota Public Health Laboratory.
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- Kristen Larson-APHL Senior Specialist, Food Safety
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- Michelle Smith (Formerly APHL, Food Safety, Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services, National Food Safety, Public Health Laboratory).
- Denise Toney-Viggles (Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services, Arizona Bureau of Public Health Laboratory).
- Debbie McClure-Meyers (Connecticut Public Health Laboratory).

YARDSTICK TOOL SECTIONS

- Introduction
- Laboratory Testing
- Data Management
- Communications and Coordination With Partners
- Administration
- Fiscal Innovation

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Acknowledgments / Sources

The accurate and complete list of contributors to the development of the Yardstick Self-Assessment Tool for Public Health Laboratories will be published in the annual report of the American Public Health Association's Food Safety Section and in APHL's Food Safety Newsletter. The Yardstick was created through a collaborative effort between APHL and the Food Safety and Outreach Activities Section of the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL). This project was also supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration, Division of Public Health Laboratory Services, Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHR), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and was carried out under Cooperative Agreement U60/0118535 between the Association of Public Health Laboratories and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The content and conclusions of this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of CDC.

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Objectives

• Understanding of what the Yardstick tool will assess
• Know who within your public health system should be utilizing the tool
• See the Yardstick tool end-product and what your public health system can do with the tool results
• Know what you can expect in the future for the Yardstick self-assessment tool
Yardstick Self-Assessment Tool

• Comprehensive, web-based self assessment tool for your PH food safety system
• Many PHLs will need to collaborate with food safety testing partners in order to complete parts of the tool
• Question responses will be confidential; only APHL Food Safety staff designated as administrators will be able to see system-specific results
Yardstick Self-Assessment Tool

• Sections:
  o Introduction
  o Table of Contents
  o Laboratory Testing
  o Data Management
  o Communications and Coordination with Partners
  o Administration Organization
  o Glossary of Terms
What Does the Tool Assess?

• The Yardstick self-assessment tool will assess four main areas of your PH food safety system:
  o Laboratory Testing
  o Data Management
  o Communication and Coordination with Partners
  o Administration Organization

• Within each area are question groups that relate to that particular area
Yardstick Self Assessment Tool for Public Health Food Safety Testing

Enter username and password to login

Username: [blank]
Password: [blank]

Remember me
Forgot Password?

Sign In

REQUEST ACCESS FORM

Select Lab Name
- Select Lab Name -

State or Territory
- State or Territory -

Enter your Email: [blank]

Type of lab
- State Public Health Laboratory
- Local Public Health Laboratory
- Agricultural Laboratory
- State Chemist Laboratory

Submit

Below is a list of labs that already have access. Each lab can only be activated once.

- Active Labs -
# Yardstick Tool - Laboratory Testing

## Yardstick Self Assessment Tool for Public Health Food Safety Testing

### Choose any single group of questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Groups</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collection, Submission, and Storage of Specimens/Samples</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verification/Validation/Capability Studies</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Issues and Recommended Test Capabilities</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PulseNet Activities</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Reports
- Individual Report
- Aggregate Report

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Yardstick Tool - Data Management
Yardstick Tool - Communication/Coordination with Partners

Yardstick Self Assessment Tool for Public Health Food Safety Testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Groups</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Relationships</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak Planning</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual Report | Aggregate Report

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### Yardstick Self Assessment Tool for Public Health Food Safety Testing

#### Question Groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Groups</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Laboratory Website</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Legal Issues</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Laboratory Certifications and Accreditations</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Budget</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Facilities</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Testing/Safety Equipment</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Communications Equipment</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Personnel</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Training and Continuing Education (CE)</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Laboratory Safety</td>
<td>no past results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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For Whom is the Tool Designed?

• Any PHL* that performs foodborne disease testing
  o Pathogens
  o Chemicals
  o Radiation

• Designed to evaluate the capability & capacity of a state or jurisdiction’s food safety system and identify any gaps that might exist
“Public Health Laboratory”

• A state, regional, or local public health laboratory or state agriculture or chemist laboratory that performs testing in support of public health authorities (state division of public health or state department of agriculture) in their jurisdiction (from Yardstick Glossary of Terms)

• More than just clinical public health laboratories...
What Will be the End-product?
## Laboratory Testing: Collection, Submission, and Storage of Specimens/Samples

**Key:**
- Green ✔ = Good answer
- Red X = Needs attention, high priority
- Yellow X = Needs attention, medium priority
- Blue X = Needs attention, low priority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does your laboratory have written policies and procedures regarding specimen/sample collection and transport?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. If Yes above...</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Are these written policies and procedures available to all laboratory personnel and clients who submit specimens/samples to the laboratory?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Are specimen/sample requirements and procedures for collection and transport embedded in each testing SOP?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Is there documentation of at least annual review by the laboratory director?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Does the laboratory director or designee approve all changes before implementation?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Individual Report- Cont’d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.7 The laboratory’s requirements for specimen/sample labeling</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.8 Handling and storage conditions between collection and delivery to the laboratory.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9 Packaging and shipping requirements</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10 A clear listing of rejection criteria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11 Laboratory contact information for questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Does your laboratory requisition form include the following elements?</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Patient/sample identifier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Patient sex (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Patient date of birth or age (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Patient contact information (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Name and address of the physician or person legally authorized to order the test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The test(s) requested</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Date and time of specimen/sample collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Source of specimen/sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Additional information as required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your form contains:
What Will be the End-product?
Aggregate Report

Laboratory Testing: Collection, Submission, and Storage of Specimens/Samples

Question

24. Does your laboratory have a protocol for ensuring the security and integrity of isolates stored off-site?

23. Does your laboratory store any isolates off-site?

12. If yes to question 20, does your destruction protocol for stored isolates include (check all that apply)?

21. Does your laboratory have a protocol in place for the destruction of stored isolates when your facility either runs out of physical space for storage or your facility deems the isolates no longer significant to justify storage any longer?

20. Does your PHL have a stored specimen inventory system or database for facilitating retrieval of stored isolates?

19.7 Surveillance cameras

19.6 Isolate usage log

19.5 Regular inspections of the security measures

19.4 General signage, not indicating specific names and location of organisms, on the exterior of storage equipment

19.3 Background checks of employees
Assessment Results

Survey Results Report

Laboratory Testing: Collection, Submission, and Storage of Specimens/Samples

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<td>2</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Can Your PHL Use the Tool?

• See how your food safety system conforms to the Yardstick Task Force recommendations for food safety laboratory best practices
• View progress towards meeting the recommendations over time
• Use aggregate data to compare your food safety system to all others; possible opportunity to advocate for more resources
Yardstick Tool- Next Steps

• Increase awareness of the tool
  o APHL Annual Meeting
  o 2014 APHL Webinar

• Develop process for revisions and updates
  o Who, when and how

• APHL- collate de-identified data from all PH food safety systems/ sites
  o Can use data to advocate for more resources
  o Can use data to prioritize programmatic efforts
Yardstick Task Force

- **John Fontana** - CT SPHL
- **Heather Green** - Formerly APHL Food Safety
- **Billie Ann Juni** - MN DOH-PHL
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- **Kirsten Larson** - APHL Food Safety
- **Tim Monson** - WI SPHL
* **Craig Hedberg** - Univ. MN School of Public Health

- **Shari Shea** - APHL Director of Food Safety
- **Lori Smith** - Utah Unified SPHL
- **Michael Smith** - Formerly APHL Food Safety
- **Denise Toney** - VA Div. Consol. Laboratory Services
- **Victor Waddell** - AZ BSLS
- **Delores Willis** - MD DOH-PHL
* **Pamela Jenkins** - NC DHHS DPH
THANK YOU

• You can provide additional feedback to info@aphl.org

• For more information about the Yardstick self-assessment tool, contact:
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  o Kirsten Larson- kirsten.larson@aphl.org

• Special thanks to the Yardstick Task Force, APHL Food Safety Committee and others who have contributed to the Yardstick assessment tool
THANK YOU- Continued

• Extra special thanks to the following SME’s that contributed a great deal of time and were integral to finishing the web-based assessment tool:
  o Robyn Atkinson
  o Dave Boxrud
  o Elizabeth Delamater
  o Kirsten Larson
  o Yvonne Salfinger