BIOSAFETY AND THE CITY

Sentinel Lab Outreach in the Big Apple

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New York City = Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island

- 8.5 million residents (2016)
- ~79 Laboratories
- 45 have comprehensive microbiology capabilities.
- 34 have restricted or no micro labs, virology, hematology, chemistry etc.
- 3 are Ebola Treatment Centers
  - We had 4 but one dropped out in 2016
New York City = Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island

NYC PHL = LRN Reference Laboratory for all 5 Boroughs
Located in “Midtown” area of Manhattan
The Journey begins...

• Started in March 2016 in the 2nd year of the ELC grant.
• Safe-T-Pak training and CAP/LPX exercises offered, but
• Limited onsite outreach conducted since 2014
  • Had an old contact database to work from
• Along with my position, PHL hired a Sentinel Laboratory Coordinator
  •Previously the Acting Supervisor for our Biothreat Response Laboratory
Starting from Scratch
DEFINITION OF SENTINEL CLINICAL LABORATORIES

SENTINEL CLINICAL LABORATORIES

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT:

- Articulate the role of sentinel clinical laboratories in the public health laboratory system
- Articulate the role of sentinel clinical laboratories in the Laboratory Response Network for Biological Threat Preparedness
- Outline the responsibilities of LRN Reference Public Health Laboratories in support of sentinel clinical laboratories

https://www.aphl.org/programs/preparedness/Pages/partnerships-outreach.aspx
Goal

Build and maintain a strong relationship between PHL and NYC Labs, that allows the LRN to function while helping them strengthen their biosafety program.
1. Update our Sentinel Laboratory contact database.
2. Reach out to labs to re-establish communications.
3. Determine laboratory testing capabilities, existing biosafety plan elements, training needs.
4. Laboratory Visits
5. Provide training and other resources.
Update Lab Database

• Cold called labs on old database
• Sent out a survey asking for APHL defined contact database elements

• NY State Wadsworth Center - ELC survey/communications drill
  • Collected primary and secondary contact information in addition to ELC measures.
  • March 2016 - 33 of labs needed to be contacted for follow up
  • March 2017 - 27 of labs needed to be contacted for follow up
Re-establish Communications

Dear Sentinel Labs,

Who we are
Established in 1892 the Public Health Laboratory was the world’s first Municipal Bacteriological Laboratory. The PHL has since expanded to provide a wide variety of clinical and environmental laboratory testing services. Today, the PHL performs testing on more than two hundred thousand specimen it receives each year.

We also serve as the City’s Reference Laboratory as part of the CDC’s Laboratory Response Network (LRN).

What We Provide
As your Reference Laboratory, it is our responsibility to provide:

- Biosafety and Risk Assessment Training
- Training or access to training for sentinel clinical laboratories encouraging them to maintain a competent staff who is knowledgeable in the ASM Sentinel Level Clinical Microbiology Guidelines for Suspected Agents of Bioterrorism and Emerging Infectious Diseases. Training includes:
  - Recognition, rule-out testing and referral of potential bio threat agents,
  - IATA Division 6.2 packaging and shipping of infectious specimens and isolates, and
  - Chain of custody

It is also our responsibility to provide technical consultations as well as provide any guidance and assistance regarding clinical laboratory testing, confirmatory testing, and biosafety.

Coming soon
In the coming months Anna and I will be reaching out to each of you to schedule a meet and greet to see where we can be of most help to your laboratory. You may also receive emails about future trainings or current laboratory guideline updates.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to us first with any questions, concerns, or help you and your laboratory might need.

Sincerely, PHL
Visits – 25 visits so far

• Emailed or called lab to see if we could come visit.

• Visits
  • Lab tour,
  • Meet lab directors or supervisors,
  • Look at risk assessments
    • NYS Requirement that all labs have to have them
  • Discuss biosafety or training needs,
  • Binder with:
    1. NYC PHL Contacts
    2. APHL Sentinel Laboratory Definition
    3. CDC LRN FAQ Sheet
    4. APHL Clinical Laboratory Biosafety Risk Management Program Assessment Checklist
    5. Laminated Biothreat Bench Cards (APHL) – with specific phone numbers on who to call for rule-outs

• Follow up
  • Thank you email
  • Checklist tool?
Exposure Visits

• 9 Laboratory-Associated Brucella Incidents (2015-2017)

• Conference Call after exposure with BCD, PHL, CDC and Sentinel lab to determine what happened, what tests were performed, where they were performed and who is high risk or low risk.

• Visit = Informal meeting with BCD, PHL, and Lab Director et al.
  • Discuss incident, future risk mitigation, proper reporting procedures (If they did not follow the algorithm for rule-outs).
  • Take a lab tour
  • Give out binder with resources
Training & Resources

• NYC PHL – Is certified to give out PACE credits.
• Saf-T-Pak training at least 3 classes/year.
  • CDC Train Shipping and Packaging
• CAP/LPX – Spring and Fall
• Printed the “Blue Book” to give out to labs
• April 2017 Eagleson Institute 2-day Clinical Laboratory Work Practices and Procedures:
  • LAI’s
  • Risk Assessment
  • Biosafety Principles
  • Donning and Doffing
  • BSCs
  • Laboratory Inspections
  • Components of Occupational Health Plans
  • Emergency Planning
  • Receiving, processing and storing specimens
  • Liquid and solid waste management
Things I’ve learned

1. Use Biosafety and Outreach Consortiums!!
   - APHL Biosafety Listserv
   - Sentinel Trainer Listserv
   - Biosafe 360
   - Regional PHL/BSO Mtgs
   - APHL BSO training
Things learned

2. What works for some outreach programs doesn’t necessarily work for all programs, especially new ones.
   ✓ Know your community
Things learned

3. Baby steps and Persistence are key
   ✓ Goals can be moving targets
   ✓ Have to gain trust first
   ✓ Don’t get discouraged by labs who won’t engage
Things learned

4. Offer incentive
   ✓ PACE Credits
   ✓ Pay for trainings
   ✓ Pay for exercises
Things I’ve learned

5. In-house trainings open doors to better communication between PHL and Labs
   ✓ Lab testing capabilities
   ✓ Health and safety concerns
   ✓ Risk assessment help
Future Outreach

• Survey Eagleson Biosafety Workshop participants to see if they were able to incorporate things they learned.

• Update PHL website to provide resources, documents and training announcements.

• Continue site visits.
Future Goals

• Biothreat Agent wet lab with biosafety incorporation
• Host webinars
• Get all micro labs to participate in CAP/LPX
• Incorporate packaging and shipping drill into CAP/LPX
• Work with labs to perform biosafety risk management
1. Develop Goal for program
2. Create database of labs
3. Establish Communication
4. Survey Plan/offer trainings based on needs
5. Site visits – Face to face interaction builds important relationships that will compliment and help a program to grow.
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