

CDC & APHL Cooperative Agreement OE20-2001 Performance Summary

REPORTING PERIOD: JULY – DECEMBER 2020

OE20-2001: Enhancing Public Health Laboratory Capabilities and Increasing Capacity

Building upon previous and currently funded Cooperative Agreements (CoAg) between CDC and the [Association of Public Health Laboratories \(APHL\)](#), [OE20-2001](#) aims to improve public health in the United States and globally by enhancing the effectiveness and functionality of public health laboratories (PHLs), individually and as components of a national system. This CoAg supports four key strategies and activities that will enhance the capabilities and increase the capacities of PHLs in nine focus areas.

9 FOCUS AREAS

- A. Foundational Leadership and Support
- B. Environmental Health
- C. Foodborne, Waterborne, and Environmentally Transmitted Diseases
- D. Infectious Diseases
- E. Informatics
- F. Newborn Screening and Genetics
- G. Preparedness and Response
- H. Quality and Safety Systems
- I. Workforce Development



STRATEGY 1

Science, Management and Operations



STRATEGY 2

Policy, Partnership and Communications



STRATEGY 3

Training and Capacity Building



STRATEGY 4

Laboratory Quality, Safety, and Informatics

SELECTED STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

POLICY, PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNICATIONS



- Develop policy and issues analyses to promote public health laboratory interests.
- Facilitate information exchange and dissemination between laboratory professionals and other stakeholders in public health, healthcare and beyond.
- Collect and analyze information, create content, and disseminate products to inform stakeholders about the role of public health laboratories and the tools and resources available to them.

TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING



- Identify training and workforce development needs among laboratory professionals in diverse settings.
- Develop curriculum frameworks and training and workforce development resources for laboratory professionals in diverse settings.
- Design and implement programs to strengthen the public health laboratory workforce pipeline.

LABORATORY QUALITY, SAFETY, AND INFORMATICS



- Develop and implement solutions and standards to improve data exchange and interoperability.
- Improve the practice of laboratory quality and safety in public health laboratories.
- Employ emerging methodologies and process improvements in public health laboratories.
- Provide technical assistance to public health laboratories and other stakeholders.
- Identify and address gaps in laboratory preparedness and response to public health threats.

ABOUT THE RECIPIENT: Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL)



APHL works to strengthen laboratory systems serving the public's health in the United States and globally. Its members, known as "public health laboratories," monitor, detect, and respond to health threats. With over 20 years' experience in more than 30 countries, APHL is recognized internationally as a leader in laboratory science and practice.

FOCUS AREA PERFORMANCE MEASURE HIGHLIGHTS JULY-DECEMBER 2020

Training and Capacity Building

- 78%**
Completion rate for quality and safety formal needs assessments.
- 71%**
Proportion of new or updated resources developed to help implement of quality and safety systems solutions.
- 100%**
Proportion of PHLs that adopted practices outlined in new or updated [biosafety resources](#).
- 89%**
Proportion of interviews completed to develop model outreach practices to the clinical community.

Laboratory Quality, Safety, and Informatics

- 2**
Number of resources developed:
 - [COVID-19 Antigen Testing Biosafety Guidance and Potential Hazards](#)
 - [Recommended Mitigation Procedures for COVID-19](#)

Policy, Partnerships, and Communication

- 33**
Number of Regional Consortia calls. These calls provided a consistent platform for consortia members to share knowledge and practices on their response to the COVID-19 pandemic and project priorities.



SUCCESS STORIES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Implementation Successes

- Quality and Safety Systems (QSS) and Regional Consortia:** Ongoing collaboration with CDC/APHL for the COVID-19 response. Served as focus group to provide input on workforce needs to combat the pandemic.
- NGS Project:** 65 [tools and resources](#) encompassing the 12 Quality System Essentials for Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) were developed for public health laboratories.
- Biosafety/Biosecurity Committee:** Continued to serve as subject matter experts. APHL staff facilitated the implementation of biosafety and biosecurity activities specifically related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

 **LABORATORY SYSTEM AND STANDARDS (LSS)**

Even with the pandemic, the LSS Committee continued to meet regularly and move several key priorities ahead:

- 2021 APHL Annual Conference planning.
- [Healthy People 2030](#).
- Integration of the updated Ten Essential Services and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) concepts into system improvements (L-SIP).
- See [Quality Improvement Forum calls](#) archives, including “Effective Strategies to Support a Culture Quality and Safety” – November 2020.

Implementation Challenges

- Travel restrictions and shift in priorities due to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Time investment to develop a new monitoring and evaluation plan.

Implementation Solutions

- Due to the COVID-19 response, activities will be carried over to the next implementation year.
- APHL will prioritize performance measures, manpower, and software to support systematic reporting.

