What’s in your Public Health Laboratory Interoperability Project (PHLIP) data feed for influenza?

Your PHLIP Electronic Laboratory Surveillance Message (ELSM) for influenza provides critical laboratory surveillance information to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD). Your automated data feed helps CDC epidemiologists understand influenza and other respiratory disease trends in a timely manner and helps lighten the load of reporting manually. Additionally, this data is used to provide important planning metrics, such as numbers of specimens tested by public health labs by various test methods. This allows CDC to plan for and to justify appropriate resources to ensure that partner laboratories are well-supported.

Did you know that the PHLIP message can consolidate multiple reporting streams? To ensure you are maximizing the utility of your existing PHLIP reports, give your data feed an Annual PHLIP check-up! In addition to your standard data elements, which include all influenza tests and results for typing, subtyping and lineage typing, check to see if you can add in the following:

- Other respiratory virus testing
  - By adding other respiratory virus tests and results to your PHLIP feed, you can simultaneously report to the CDC National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) and to the Influenza Division, without adding any additional data streams!

- Influenza-Like Illness (ILINet) / Sentinel Providers Specimen Flag and Emerging Infections Program (EIP) Specimen Flag (for program participants)
  - CDC Influenza Division can use information on whether the specimen is from a Sentinel Provider as an indicator for severity.

- Influenza Incidence Surveillance Project (IISP)/Acute Respiratory Infection Epidemiology and Surveillance Specimen Flag (for study participants)
  - By flagging this special study correctly in the PHLIP feed, there is a chance that you can replace reporting for this program with your current PHLIP feed, pending IISP/ARIES staff approval.

- Epidemiologically important information
  - Vaccination status, travel history, and pregnancy status are just a few examples of epidemiologically important information that can be sent through your PHLIP feed.

- Appropriate identifier in Specimen ID
  - Ensure that the specimen ID included in your PHLIP message matches the specimen ID sent with specimens to the CDC laboratory. This allows the CDC Influenza Division to link data received through PHLIP with testing results from the CDC Influenza Laboratory.

- Pyrosequencing tests and results
  - Influenza pyrosequencing testing for antiviral resistance can be reported to the CDC Influenza Laboratory via your PHLIP feed!

If you have questions or would like to give your PHLIP feed a tune-up, contact Desiree Mustaquim with the CDC Influenza Division at dwc6@cdc.gov to get started!

APHL’s Technical Assistance Team is currently supporting labs that are interested in upgrading their PHLIP message version from HL7 2.3.1 to HL7 2.5.1. For more information, email us at informatics.support@aphl.org