Upcoming L-SIP Assessments

Congratulations to Louisville, KY and Fairfax County, VA, who will be convening L-SIP assessments on April 23 and May 29, 2015, respectively. Additionally, IA and MT will be conducting L-SIP reassessments in Spring 2015. We look forward to hearing about your experiences in future APHL publications and teleconferences!

Current L-SIP Map
The colored city and states in the map represent the 31 states and two local public health laboratory systems that have convened an L-SIP assessment, as well as one public health laboratory which completed an L-SIP reassessment. If your laboratory has not completed an assessment, and you are interested in learning more about L-SIP and how to connect with your laboratory system partners by convening an L-SIP assessment, join your colleagues for the Spring 2015 technical assistance calls. Public health laboratories that conducted an assessment prior to 2011 are strongly encouraged to join New Hampshire to conduct a reassessment and evaluate the impact of previous changes and to assess where gaps still exist in the laboratory system since the first assessment. For more information, see section below on L-SIP Recruitment.

For More Information
Please visit the L-SIP site on APHL.org.

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Save the Date: February Quality Improvement Forum call on Orange County PHL’s L-SIP Strategic Plan for 2014-2016

In March 2014, Orange County was the second local member to complete a local Laboratory System Improvement Program (L-SIP) assessment. The Quality Improvement Forum call on the quality improvement activities that resulted from this assessment will be held on Thursday, February 26 at 2–3 pm ET. Julia Wolfe, the coordinator for Orange County’s post-L-SIP assessment activities, will present on the Orange County Health Care Agency L-SIP Strategic Plan for 2014–2016. Her presentation will cover prioritized Essential Service outcomes, Laboratory Quality Improvement committee-assigned projects, three QI groups that represent clinical, environmental and molecular epidemiology disciplines and challenges faced with keeping staff and partners on track with project goals. Please register your laboratory for the call (only one registration per site is needed), so that APHL can capture participation and continue to provide applicable training to members. Questions? Contact Tina Su at bertina.su@aphl.org.

Quality Improvement Forum Update

The Quality Improvement Forum (QIF) meets via teleconference bimonthly. Each call consists of a structured training or learning component and “open mic” time for sharing of quality improvement activities or obtaining of information from your peers. The learning component of the calls is focused on the sharing of quality improvement activities in public health laboratory systems, including discussions on post–L-SIP assessment activities.

In October 2014, Denise Lopez, public health laboratory manager and ELAP director at the Tulare County Public Health Laboratory, presented "Out of the Valley of Despair: The Tulare County Public Health Lab’s Lean Journey," which covered challenges and successes laboratory staff have faced as they continue shifting towards a team-based culture as the vehicle for on-going continuous quality and efficiency improvements using Lean.

In December 2014, Dr. Leslie Wolf, PhD, coordinator for the L-SIP assessment, presented "The NC L-SIP Experience," covering lessons learned, from planning to post-assessment activities.

Recordings of the past QIF calls can be found in audio files that are available at the bottom of the APHL L-SIP website. Other materials from past Quality Improvement Forum can be found on the APHL Member Resource Center by using search words “Quality Improvement Forum.” If you would like to share with others a presentation on a quality improvement activity occurring in your laboratory or would like to join the group either as a participant on the calls and/or to be part of one of the workgroups, contact Tina Su at bertina.su@aphl.org to be added to the distribution list. Announcements are also listed in the APHL eUpdate. The forum
meets every other month.

L-SIP Recruitment
Recruitment for states and locals interested in conducting an L-SIP assessment in Spring, Fall or Winter 2015 has begun. Public health laboratories which conducted an assessment prior to 2011 are strongly encouraged to conduct a reassessment to assess the impact of previous changes and to document where gaps still might be in the laboratory system since the first assessment.

Technical assistance calls will be held on the following dates and times.

Tuesday, February 17 at 1:00 pm ET
- Topics covered: overview of L-SIP, resources available to members, process for preparing for an assessment

Thursday, March 5 at 1:00 pm ET
- Topics covered: identification of stakeholders to invite to an L-SIP assessment, details about facilitators and theme takers, materials to include the participant packet

Tuesday, March 10 at 1:00 pm ET
- Topics covered: assessment evaluation, examples of post-assessment quality improvement activities

Once your state or local public health laboratory system has committed to conducting an assessment, APHL will provide a mentor, a representative from a state or local laboratory that has previously conducted an L-SIP assessment to offer guidance. The mentor will serve as a resource and can answer questions related to preparing for an assessment. To receive information about the process, financial support and technical assistance, please contact Tina Su at bertina.su@aphl.org.

Quality Assurance Listserv
Laboratory staff from all United States member laboratories is invited to sign up to participate on the Quality Assurance Listserv. This member benefit is a forum for your quality related questions to your peers and the sharing of possible solutions and lessons learned. Recent topics include significant figures and acceptance limits for controls for clinical samples and questions related to the recent of shipped specimens for testing on the Abbott Architect. An archive of previous listserv postings can be found here. To join in on the conversation or request access to the archive, please contact Tina Su at bertina.su@aphl.org.
Upcoming Meetings

- 2015 APHL Annual Meeting, May 18–21, 2015 in Indianapolis, Indiana