

CDC & APHL Cooperative Agreement OE20-2001 Performance Summary

REPORTING PERIOD: JULY 2020 – JUNE 2021

OE20-2001: ENHANCING PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY CAPABILITIES AND INCREASING CAPACITY

[OE20-2001](#) enhances the effectiveness and operations of public health laboratories (PHLs), individually and as part of a national system. This Cooperative Agreement (CoAg) supports four key strategies and activities to increase the capabilities and capacities of PHLs in nine focus areas. It builds on past and present CoAgS between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the [Association of Public Health Laboratories \(APHL\)](#).



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

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

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 the laboratory community and other partners and audiences in public health, healthcare and beyond.
- Collect and analyze information, create content, and disseminate products to inform target audiences 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 across diverse settings.
- Develop curriculum frameworks and training and workforce development resources for laboratory professionals across 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 partners.
- 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 public health laboratory science and practice.

HIGHLIGHTS: CROSS-CUTTING PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Policy, Partnership and Communications



100%

Proportion of completed policy priorities identified on eight topics by APHL committees.

875

Number of events held to engage partners and collaborators for knowledge sharing.

18

Number of evidence-based tools/resources developed according to the workplan.

77%

Proportion of completed responses received for formal needs assessments and resource development.

Training and Capacity Building

13,341

Number of individuals who participated in APHL training and workforce development opportunities.

91%

Proportion of learners that self-reported an increase in knowledge, skills and abilities.

253

Number of trainings and workforce development opportunities delivered to address public health laboratory workforce needs.



Laboratory Quality, Safety and Informatics

68

Number of standardized guidelines for data exchange/transmissions developed/updated that addressed priority informatics needs.

68%

Proportion of PHLs adopting APHL informatics and data management solutions and guidelines.

568

Number of views of the [Guidance for Laboratory BioMonitoring Programs](#) webpage, which shares new or updated resources (guidance documents, shared service models, etc.).

88

Number of PHLs in the Laboratory Response Network for Biological Threats Preparedness (LRN-B) that met laboratory testing capacity for emergency response.

54

Number of PHLs in the Laboratory Response Network for Chemical Threats Preparedness (LRN-C) that met laboratory testing capacity for emergency response.

100%

Proportion of 32 new/updated resources developed to facilitate implementation of quality and safety systems and standards to address identified challenges and gaps.

59%

Proportion of formal technical assistance requests fulfilled through SME (subject matter expert) services.



**GUIDANCE FOR LABORATORY
BIOMONITORING PROGRAMS**

Developing Biomonitoring Capabilities

HIGHLIGHTS: SUCCESSES FROM PERFORMANCE MEASURE NARRATIVES

Policy, Partnership and Communications

APHL facilitated information exchange among practitioners and other partners.

- Worked with marketing and communication to educate the public and other partners.
- Promoted and provided information about the tools and resources available to public health laboratories and partners.

"APHL Policy & Partnership synthesizes information gathered from members, partners, multiple newsletters, the Federal Register and state and federal legislative subscription services and shares it in a timely manner via various mechanisms, with partnerships and federal partners."



PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY WORKFORCE NEEDS

As evidenced by COVID-19 and other emerging infectious disease outbreaks over the last several years, the public health laboratory workforce needs to remain flexible and diverse in its ability to respond to a broad range of threats, both man-made and natural in origin.



<https://www.aphl.org/aboutAPHL/publications/Documents/QSA-2021-PHL-Workforce-Needs.pdf>

Training and Capacity Building



APHL built laboratory professionals' knowledge and skills through webinars, conferences, and courses.

- Leveraged online platform to increase access to a range of courses.
- Developed and implemented fellowship and emerging leaders' programs (ELP) with a focus on increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - 44 states have had at least one ELP participant (see image on left). See the [APHL Emerging Leader Program website](#) for more information.

Laboratory Quality, Safety, and Informatics

APHL identified and developed processes for streamlining and standardizing data exchange.

- Maintained APHL Informatics Messaging Services (AIMS) to securely host data and improve data exchange and interoperability between state, local, federal entities.
- Expanded communication capabilities of AIMS and developed the AIMS CoAg Maintenance & Operations Approval and Documentation Process.
- Provided technical assistance to public health laboratories to send and receive data.



"A comprehensive data exchange roadmap was developed to improve data exchange and interoperability while reducing the burden on data partners. This improvement will benefit the many public health agencies (PHAs) and public health laboratories (PHLs) utilizing the data lake for a diverse range of datasets."

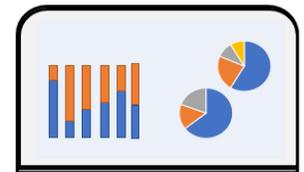
HIGHLIGHTS: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS FROM PERFORMANCE MEASURE NARRATIVES

Common Challenges Across Strategies

- Activities were reprioritized due to public health emergency response activities.
- Travel restrictions affected several trainings and events in-person attendance.
- Data collection was put on hold to avoid burdening members with additional requests.
- Limited staff time and staff transitions delayed implementation of some activities.

Solutions to Address Challenges Across Strategies

- CDC and APHL prioritized projects and timelines with available resources.
- APHL reformatted meetings and trainings from in-person to virtual.



An M&E Dashboard was created to improve standardization and centralization of reporting

For more information on the OE20-2001 Cooperative Agreement, please visit: www.cdc.gov/csels/dls/funding/announcements/oe20-2001/

For questions, please email DLSEvaluation@cdc.gov

Data Source: Year 1 performance measure data and annual progress reports submitted by recipient.

Last updated 8/2023

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

