

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, 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 \(APHL\)](#).

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 H: Quality and Safety Systems

Focus Area Performance Measure Highlights July 2020 – June 2021

Training and Capacity Building

77%

Completion rate for quality and safety formal needs assessments (77 of 99 PHLs).

100%

Percent of new/updated resources developed to facilitate implementation of quality and safety systems and standards and to address identified challenges and gaps (6 of 6 resources).

100%

Proportion of interviews completed with PHLs to develop model outreach practices to the clinical laboratory community (9 of 9 interviews).

Laboratory Quality, Safety, and Informatics

2

Number of resources developed:

1. [COVID-19 Antigen Testing Biosafety Guidance and Potential Hazards](#)
2. [Recommended Mitigation Procedures for COVID-19](#)

Policy, Partnerships, and Communication

58

Number of Regional Consortia calls. These calls provided a consistent platform for consortia members to share knowledge and practices on their response to the 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 public health emergency response. Collected data on workforce needs and developed a training plan to address gaps. Published [a manuscript](#) on regional consortia as an approach to strengthen PHL partnership and collaboration.
- **Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) Project:** Developed 79 [tools and resources](#) for PHLs encompassing the 12 Quality System Essentials NGS.
- **Biosafety & Biosecurity:** The BBC served as subject matter experts to APHL on biosafety matters. Delivered 2 biosafety and biosecurity training webinars reaching over 1,500 laboratory staff and offered BioSafe 360 Program to over 150 biosafety professionals. The [APHL Biosafety tools webpage](#) has over 1,000 unique visitors since July 2020.

Biosafety and Biosecurity Committee (BBC)



Even with the pandemic, the BBC continued to meet monthly and move several key priorities ahead:

- BBC members presented and led discussions on 3 APHL National Biosafety and Biosecurity calls with 46 state PHLs represented on at least one call.
- BBC members delivered the session “Building Biosafety Across Non-traditional Laboratories” during the 2021 APHL annual conference.
- BBC members reviewed quality and safety standards and guidelines and published 2 APHL Lab Matters Articles to promote good laboratory practices.

Implementation Challenges

- APHL prioritized projects that were of greatest need to address the response activities.
- As in-person events were delayed or cancelled, APHL used other channels to disseminate information and resources to members (e.g., newsletters and communities of practice).

Implementation Solutions

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

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

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

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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).

