

## APPENDIX A

### Definition of a State Public Health Laboratory System

The State Public Health Laboratory System (SPHL system) consists of all the participants in public health laboratory testing, including those who initiate testing and those who ultimately use the test results. The System includes stakeholders who are directly involved in creating and using laboratory data. Other important stakeholders include those who are concerned with complementary Essential Services, such as Training and Education and Public Health Related Research. Together, individuals and organizational stakeholders are involved in assuring that laboratory data support the 10 Essential Services of Public Health.

The goals of the National Laboratory System are to support voluntary, interdependent partnerships of clinical, environmental, agricultural, and veterinary laboratories, through public-private collaboration, for assurance of quality laboratory services and public health surveillance. The concepts of an SPHL system are embodied in the Ten Essential Services and in the APHL Core Functions and Capabilities of State Public Health Laboratories. These documents are available on the APHL website at [www.aphl.org](http://www.aphl.org). A successful National Laboratory System is dependent on the creation of fully integrated and coordinated networks in every state, and is seen as an essential part of the larger state public health system.

The SPHL system should assure that:

1. Public health threats are detected and that intervention is timely
2. Stakeholders are appropriately informed of potential threats
3. Reportable conditions are monitored in a comprehensive statewide system
4. Specimens and isolates for public health testing are sufficient to provide comprehensive public health surveillance and response
5. Public health laboratory data are transmitted to appropriate state and federal agencies responsible for disease surveillance and control

The *State Public Health Laboratory* (SPHL) has a leadership role in developing and promoting the SPHL system through active collaboration with stakeholders, including epidemiologists, first responders, environmental professionals in water, food, and air surveillance activities, private clinical and environmental laboratories, and local public health laboratories. The SPHL provides leadership to assure that essential and state-of-the-art laboratory services are provided and that clinical laboratories that perform public health testing on reportable infectious diseases submit results to the public health surveillance system using national testing guidelines. To provide leadership, the SPHL monitors essential components of the SPHL system such as completeness of reporting and accuracy of laboratory testing results. The SPHL also assures that accurate results are reported in a manner that is appropriate and sufficiently timely to support effective public health response. An effective SPHL system requires proactive leadership by the SPHL to monitor public health testing processes by clinical and environmental laboratories. To assure that the SPHL system is effective, the SPHL should at a minimum:

1. Maintain an integrated information system that includes all stakeholders that rely on accurate laboratory data
2. Employ a full-time state public health laboratory system coordinator
3. Create a standing public health laboratory advisory committee
4. Provide an interactive website or other electronic system to maintain regular communication channels for system partners.

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