

Canada-Mexico-United States Public Health Laboratory Network



A Model for Partnership and
Collaboration in North America

APHL: Broad Picture

Vision

A healthier world through quality laboratory practice.

Mission

To promote the role of public health laboratories in shaping national and global health objectives, and to promote policies, programs, and technologies which assure continuous improvement in the quality of laboratory practice and health outcomes.

Association History

- 1899: APHA formed the Committee of Laboratories
- 1921: Southern Public Health Laboratory Association formed
- 1927: became State Laboratory Directors Conference and opened membership to other states
- 1939: changed its name to Conference of State and Provincial Laboratory Directors
- 1951: Association of State and Territorial Public Health Laboratory Directors (ASTPHLD) founded



ASTPHLD to APHL

1998

A more inclusive organization with new membership categories



What is APHL?

- A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
- Almost 800 members representing:
 - State and local public health labs
 - State environmental and agricultural labs
 - Federal agencies
 - Academic institutions.
- Advocates at the national level for critical laboratory issues and for increased support/resources for member labs.
- Provides training and best practices for public health laboratory policy and programs.



**The Canadian Public Health
Laboratory Network**

Creating a Cohesive Public Health Network

CPHLN Broad Picture:

Vision

Be an action-oriented national public health laboratory network that provides valuable advice and services which form the foundation for the broader public health system.

Mission

To provide leadership and consultation in all aspects of the public health system through the continued development of a proactive network of public health laboratories to protect and improve the health of the people of Canada.

CPHLN Background

1949—1994:

- Technical Advisory Committee

1994—2000:

- No functional laboratory network

2001:

- Canadian Public Health Laboratory Forum

2003:

- Canadian Public Health Laboratory formed
- Secretariat hired

2005:

- Pan-Canadian Public Health Network Launched

CPHLN Membership

- Provincial Public Health Laboratories (10)
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Defence Research and Development Canada
- Council of Chief Medical Officers of Health
- Canadian Blood Services
- Héma-Québec
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- **The CPHLN core is comprised of medical and scientific laboratory directors**



CPHLN International Linkages



- CPHLN MOU with APHL
- *PulseNet Canada* linked to *PulseNet USA*
- *Chinese Public Health Laboratory Network for Emergency Response*
- CNPHI collaboration centers to link 23 countries within CAREC
- *Global Laboratory Network Directory MAP (GLaDMAP)*
- Support of the *Global Health Security Action Group (GHSAG)*
- CNPHI Collaboration Centers
- Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America
 - Canada/Mexico/United States

APHL + CPHLN:

Changing Times and Organizations

2004: In response to SARS, Canada establishes the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

- The Canadian Public Health Laboratory Network (CPHLN) is established as one of seven standing technical working groups within PHAC.
- A Secretariat is established for the CPHLN to be the focal point for public health laboratories within PHAC and to support and coordinate the activities of the CPHLN.

APHL + CPHLN:

Changing Times and Organizations

2005: APHL is invited to meet with the Secretariat of CPHLN in Ottawa.

- Opportunity for two organizations to learn about each other.
- APHL appoints a liaison to CPHLN.
 - Liaison:
 - » Attends CPHLN semi-annual meetings and reports to APHL board on CPHLN activities.
 - » Updates CPHLN on APHL activities (nationally, northern border)
 - » Serves as advisor to CPHLN
 - Formal standing invitation for CPHLN Secretariat attendance at APHL annual meetings.

APHL + CPHLN: The Next Steps

2004: First Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between APHL and CPHLN

- Organizations pledged to communicate on matters re: affecting public health laboratories
- Promise to provide support during public health emergencies affecting both countries.

APHL + CPHLN: First MOU-The Payoff

2007: The H2N2 Surprise

- A CAP proficiency test specimen containing viable H2N2 virus was sent to participating laboratories.
- CPHLN members among 1st to ID virus and potential public health implications
- CPHLN commenced chain of action alert:

Secretariat  APHL  CDC

- Permitted APHL efforts with CAP and CDC to collect and destroy the specimens.

APHL + CPHLN

Partners Across Borders



- 2008: New MOU signed between APHL & CPHLN.
- 2008: Joint APHL-CPHLN Cross-Border Pandemic Influenza Meeting, Toronto, Ontario.
 - Brought together the CPHLN membership with APHL members in the northern borders states.
 - APHL and CPHLN staff developed working relationships in the planning and conduct of the meeting.
 - Supported by US CDC and Canada NML.

APHL + CPHLN

Partners Across Borders



2009: H1N1 Outbreak

- APHL and CPHLN collaborated to assure a coordinated public health laboratory response
 - Held regular conference calls
 - APHL successfully advocated for CPHLN to receive CDC reagents and supplies in early phase of the epidemic.

APHL + CPHLN

Partners Across Borders



2009: APHL and CPHLN executive offices remain in constant communication at executive and staff levels.

- CPHLN contracts with APHL to develop a public health laboratory system assessment tool.
- CPHLN Secretariat makes direct reports to the APHL board.
- Discussions begin regarding a North American (US-Canada-Mexico) public health laboratory meeting.

APHL + CPHLN

Partners Across Borders

- 2010: Follow-up to the 2008 Cross-Border Pandemic Influenza Meeting, Vancouver, BC
 - In addition to Canada and US representatives, included staff from InDRE (Mexico CDC) and border state laboratory directors
- 2010: Representatives from CPHLN and APHL address Mexico National meeting of epidemiologists and laboratorians

Canada-Mexico-United States Public Health Laboratory Network

- 2011: Canada-Mexico-United States PHL network managers meeting
 - Brought together the Canada-Mexico-United States PHL network leaders.
 - To establish an alliance of the three North American PHL networks
 - Learning from pandemic influenza to improve function of laboratory networks towards improvement of global health in the North American region

Canada-Mexico-United States Public Health Laboratory Network

- MOUs
 - Revise CPHLN-APHL MOU
 - Develop MOUs with InDRE
- Information Sharing
 - Develop a directory of network members within three countries utilizing GLaD
- Training
 - Sharing of training/training materials/exercises



Canada-Mexico-United States Public Health Laboratory Network

- Communication
 - Establish protocols for routine and emergency communication between and amongst the three networks
- Assure alignment with other initiatives
 - Initiatives such as GHSAG, NAPAP, etc
 - Identify all bi/tri national initiatives with/without laboratory activities that may have impact on laboratory network members

Thank You!

Eric Blank

Senior Director, Public Health Systems

240.485.2785

Eric.blank@aphl.org

