



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER – GOVERNOR
RUSSELL S. BARRON – DIRECTOR

CHRISTOPHER L. BALL, PH.D., HCLD (ABB) – BUREAU CHIEF
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Bureau of Laboratories
2220 Old Penitentiary Road
Boise, ID 83712
PHONE 208-334-2235
FAX 208-334-4765

July 19, 2018

Dear Stakeholder,

The Idaho Bureau of Laboratories strives to provide optimal customer service for our laboratory, environmental health, public health, and public safety partners in Idaho. To evaluate our performance and identify new ways to improve services, a broad-based stakeholder group was convened to conduct a Laboratory System Improvement Program (L-SIP) self-assessment last May. This assessment determined how effectively the Idaho Public Health Laboratory System supports the Ten Essential Public Health Services at state and local levels. Attendees rated the Idaho Public Health Laboratory System from minimal activity to optimal activity in meeting performance indicators within each of the Ten Essential Services. Additionally, several recommendations for improvement were identified in each area.

This follow-up report informs system partners about progress made in addressing some of the recommendations identified during the L-SIP Assessment. The report recaps the overview of scores for each essential service, lists the performance indicators and partner recommendations, and summarizes IBL activities since the assessment to improve services for our partners. For reference, the 2017 L-SIP Report developed following the assessment is available at the IBL website (<http://www.statelab.idaho.gov> → Training and Outreach Tab → L-SIP Assessment).

We welcome your feedback on this report and look forward to strengthening the Idaho Public Health Laboratory System through our continued partnership. Please send comments, concerns, or additional recommendations via email to statelab@dhw.idaho.gov.

Sincerely,

Christopher L. Ball, Ph.D., HCLD (ABB)
Chief, Idaho Bureau of Laboratories

RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

In Progress

Recommendation: Increase communication of data and ensure that relevant stakeholders have access to data in a timely manner in a format and method that works for the client.

Update:

- Groundwater quality interactive map (<http://idaho.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=76c4ebd9acab414fab01fb954777e473>), accessible from www.statelab.idaho.gov → Environmental Testing → Resources
- Statewide antibiogram project in progress
- Get Healthy Idaho (<http://gethealthy.dhw.idaho.gov/>), maintained by the Idaho Division of Public Health, contains community health data and additional resources for healthcare professionals

Essential Service #1: Monitor Health Status to Identify Community Health Problems

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #1	Significant
1.1. Monitoring of Community Health Status	Optimal
1.1.1. The SPH Laboratory System identifies infectious disease sentinel events, monitors trends, and participates in state and federal surveillance systems.	Significant
1.1.2. The SPH Laboratory System monitors congenital, inherited, and metabolic diseases of newborns and participates in state and federal surveillance systems.	Optimal
1.1.3. The SPH Laboratory System supports the monitoring of chronic disease trends by participating in state and federal surveillance systems.	Significant
1.2. Surveillance Information Systems	Moderate
1.2.1. The SPH Laboratory System has a secure, accountable and integrated information management system for data storage, analysis, retrieval, reporting, and exchange.	Significant
1.2.2. The SPH Laboratory System partners collaborate to strengthen electronic surveillance systems.	Moderate



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

Completed

Recommendation: Build capacity in Idaho for testing all types, especially environmental testing capacity (e.g., radiological testing resources for clinical and environmental samples).

Update:

- IBL evaluating harmful algal blooms methods
- Capacity built as needed and as funding allows

In Progress

Recommendation: Identify opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders, including communicating available resources from IBL.

Update:

- Updating external website
- Clinical Forum newsletter published 3-4 times/year to update clinical partners
- 2018 antimicrobial stewardship town hall meetings throughout Idaho
- 2017-2018 training offered: biological safety, biological threat, laboratory safety, packaging and shipping infectious substances
- Idaho Groundwater Education Workgroup participant (began in 2018)

Planned

Recommendation: Consider the potential for formalizing resources, availability, questions, and requests on the environmental side, including an environmental newsletter or lab blast alerts.

Update:

- Will develop and maintain contact list for environmental labs and DEQ
- Website resources added and updated as needed
- Create annual newsletter for environmental testing partners

Essential Service #2: Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems and Health Hazards in the Community

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #2	Optimal
2.1. Appropriate and Effective High-Quality Testing	Optimal
2.1.1. The SPH Laboratory System assures the effective provision of services at the highest level of quality to assist in the detection, diagnosis, and investigation of all significant health problems and hazards.	Optimal
2.1.2. The SPH Laboratory System has the necessary system capacity, authority, and preparations in place to rapidly respond to emergencies that affect the public's health.	Significant



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

In Progress

Recommendation: Encourage partners to contact IBL to collaborate on presentations from other program areas.

Update:

- Participation in regular conferences for Idaho epidemiologists and workshops for the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ),
- Participants in Idaho's One Health group
- Working with academic partners to identify guest lecturer opportunities
- Idaho Groundwater Education Workgroup participant (began in 2018)
- Clinical lab checklist to improve compliance and understanding of regulations

Recommendation: Consider developing webinars/online training in-house.

Update:

- WebEx software available for webinars
- Online training developed and posted at www.statelab.idaho.gov → Training & Outreach → Online Courses → CLIA Regulations on Proficiency Testing and X-ray Basics
- Rabies brain extraction video for veterinarians: <https://youtu.be/dgD-ZQuHmN8>

Recommendation: Consider opportunities for outreach with colleges in North Idaho (i.e., North Idaho College, University of Idaho).

Update:

- Antimicrobial Stewardship Town Hall meetings included UI & ISU faculty
- North Idaho College Medical Laboratory Technology students invited to attend IBL training in 2018

Essential Service #3: Inform, Educate, and Empower People about Health Issues

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #3	Optimal
3.1. Outreach to Partners	Optimal
3.1.1. The SPH Laboratory System creates and delivers consistent information to community partners about relevant health issues associated with laboratory services.	Optimal
3.1.2. The SPH Laboratory System creates and provides education opportunities to health and non-health community partners.	Optimal
3.2. Empower Partners	Optimal
3.2.1. Relationship-building opportunities are employed to empower community partners.	Optimal



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

In Progress

Recommendation: Enhance communication with wastewater and drinking water laboratories.

Update:

- Participate in Statewide groundwater education group for domestic well owners (began in 2018)
- Participate in regional quality assurance review board for wastewater lab personnel (began in 2018)

Planned

Recommendation: Begin a Lab Systems Partner Group and develop a clear mission and vision. The group would allow stakeholder input in revision of rules and regulations.

Update:

- Considering feasibility and interest in a listserv to post and respond to questions
- Considering hosting regular WebEx meetings

Essential Service #4: Mobilize Community Partnerships to Identify & Solve Health Problems

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #4	Optimal
4.1. Partnership Development	Significant
4.1.1. Partners in the SPH Laboratory System develop and maintain relationships to formalize and sustain an effective system.	Significant
4.2. Communication	Optimal
4.2.1. SPH Laboratory System members communicate effectively in regular, timely, and effective ways to support collaboration.	Optimal
4.3. Resources	Optimal
4.3.1. The SPH Laboratory System works together to share existing resources and to identify new resources to assist in identifying and solving health issues.	Optimal



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

Planned

Recommendation: Develop goals and objectives to manage and measure effectiveness of programs (e.g., IBL Chemistry Manager to sit down with DEQ to develop strategies).

Recommendation: Offer workshops to PWS and wastewater partners and use these opportunities for questions and putting faces to names.

Recommendation: Provide an electronic comments/suggestion box on the IBL website for clients to offer feedback.

Essential Service #5: Develop Policies and Plans that Support Individual and Community Health Efforts

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #5	Optimal
5.1. Partnerships in Public Health Planning	Significant
5.1.1. The SPH Laboratory System obtains input from diverse partners and constituencies to develop new policies and plans and modify existing ones.	Significant
5.2. Role in Laboratory-Related Policy Making	Optimal
5.2.1. The SPH Laboratory System and partners contribute their expertise and resources using science and data to inform and influence policy.	Optimal
5.3. Dissemination & Evaluation	Significant
5.3.1. The plans and policies that affect the SPH Laboratory System are routinely evaluated, updated and disseminated.	Significant



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

Planned

Recommendation: Begin a Lab Systems Partner Group and develop a clear mission and vision. The group would allow stakeholder input in revision of rules and regulations.

Update:

- Will collect data on best way to form Lab Systems Partner Group

Recommendation: Increase two-way communication in drinking water regulations.

Update:

- Considering drinking water certification Frequently Asked Questions on the external website
- Considering newsletter for environmental laboratories
- Drinking water rules update to occur in the next five years (will seek stakeholder input)

Essential Service #6: Enforce Laws and Regulations that Protect Health and Ensure Safety

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #6	Optimal
6.1. Laws and Regulations	Optimal
6.1.1. The SPH Laboratory System is actively involved in the review and revision of laws and regulations pertaining to laboratory practice.	Optimal
6.1.2. The SPH Laboratory System encourages and promotes compliance by all laboratories in the system with all laws and regulations pertaining to laboratory practice.	Optimal
6.2. Enforcement of Laws & Regulations	Optimal
6.2.1. The SPH Laboratory System has the appropriate resources to provide or support enforcement functions for laws and regulations.	Optimal



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

Completed

Recommendation: Work with Idaho’s Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) and 101st Civil Support Team (CST) to improve communication on exercises and emergency incidents.

Update:

- Continued participation in bridge calls with RRTs and CST
- Maintaining ongoing communication on follow-up items after events involving RRTs and CST

In Progress

Recommendation: Establish and strengthen communication with tribes.

Update:

- Reached out to tribes for air auditing functions and renegotiated fees, resulting in new letters of notation with updated fees
- Free lead testing in schools program extended to tribal schools (www.statelab.idaho.gov → Environmental Testing → School Lead Testing)

Essential Service #7: Link People to Needed Personal Health Services and Assure the Provision of Healthcare When Otherwise Unavailable

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #7	Optimal
7.1. Provision of Laboratory Services	Optimal
7.1.1. The SPH Laboratory System identifies laboratory service needs and collaborates to fill gaps.	Optimal
7.1.2. The SPH Laboratory System provides timely and easily accessed quality services across the jurisdiction.	Optimal



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

Completed

Recommendation: Share SOPs and IBL Quality Management Plan with partners.

Update:

- Request copies of SOPs or Quality Management Plan at 208-334-2235 or statelab@dhw.idaho.gov

Planned

Recommendation: Begin a Lab Systems Partner Group and develop a clear mission and vision. The group would allow stakeholder input in revision of rules and regulations.

Update:

- Will collect data on best way to form Lab Systems Partner Group

Essential Service #8: Assure a Competent Public Health and Personal Healthcare Workforce

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #8	Significant
8.1. Defined Scope of Work & Practice	Optimal
8.1.1. All laboratories within the SPH Laboratory System identify position requirements and qualifications; assess competencies; and evaluate performance for all laboratory workforce categories across the entire scope of testing.	Optimal
8.2. Recruitment & Retention of Qualified Staff	Significant
8.2.1. The SPH Laboratory System maintains an environment to attract and retain highly qualified staff.	Significant
8.3. Assuring a Competent Workforce	Moderate
8.3.1. The SPH Laboratory System works to assure a competent workforce by encouraging and supporting staff development through training, education, and mentoring.	Significant
8.3.2. The SPH Laboratory System identifies and addresses current and future workforce shortage issues.	Moderate



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

Completed

Recommendation: Share SOPs and IBL Quality Management Plan with partners.

Update:

- Request copies of SOPs or Quality Management Plan at 208-334-2235 or statelab@dhw.idaho.gov

In Progress

Recommendation: Conduct knowledge retention activities for IBL staff.

Update:

- Set up electronic desk manuals for select staff
- Adapting the Association of Public Health Laboratories' (APHL) Knowledge Retention Toolkit for staff

Planned

Recommendation: Consider posting a list of CLIA-approved hospital labs on the IBL external website.

Update:

- Will post link to CLIA list on IBL website and provide directions

Essential Service #9: Evaluate Effectiveness, Accessibility and Quality of Personal and Population-Based Services

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #9	Significant
9.1. System Mission & Purpose	Significant
9.1.1. The SPH Laboratory System range of services, as defined by its mission and purpose, is evaluated on a regular basis.	Significant
9.2. System Effectiveness, Accessibility & Quality	Significant
9.2.1. The effectiveness of the personal and population-based laboratory services provided throughout the state is regularly evaluated.	Significant
9.2.2. The availability of personal and population-based laboratory services throughout the state is regularly evaluated.	Significant
9.2.3. The quality of personal and population-based laboratory services provided throughout the state is regularly evaluated.	Significant



RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATES

In Progress

Recommendation: Use current resources to expand capabilities and research activities.

Update:

- Ongoing efforts to identify and utilize current resources to assist in research and expanding testing capabilities

Planned

Recommendation: Begin a Lab Systems Partner Group and develop a clear mission and vision. The group would allow stakeholder input in revision of rules and regulations.

Update:

- Will collect data on best way to form Lab Systems Partner Group

Recommendation: Provide opportunities for students to participate in intern projects.

Update:

- Project-specific with IBL Laboratory Improvement Section as designated point of contact; will advertise to academic settings

Essential Service #10: Research for Insights and Innovative Solutions to Health Problems

Overview of Scores

Indicator	Activity Level
Essential Service #10	Moderate
10.1. Planning & Financing Research Activities	Moderate
10.1.1. The SPH Laboratory System has adequate capacity to plan research and innovation activities.	Moderate
10.2. Implementation, Evaluation and Dissemination	Significant
10.2.1. The SPH Laboratory System promotes research and innovative solutions.	Significant

