

# The National Center for Public Health Laboratory Leadership

Workforce shortages, cuts in funding, rapid advances in science and technology: these forces have catalyzed change in public health laboratories. At the same time, terrorist threats and emerging infectious diseases have compelled laboratories to add frontline response to their ongoing responsibility for advanced diagnostics.

Ironically the profession lacks a sufficient number of leaders just when it needs them most. In a survey conducted by APHL in 2007, two-thirds of state public health laboratory directors reported a shortage of candidates for leadership positions. Furthermore, those in leadership positions have few options outside of on-the-job experience to hone their leadership skills.

In response, APHL launched the National Center for Public Health Laboratory Leadership (NCPHLL) in 2002 to prepare current and emerging laboratory leaders with the skills critical to success in a rapidly evolving field. The Center aims to provide:

- **Information:** Accessible resources specific to laboratory leadership and public health practice
- **Training:** Effective leadership, strategic decision-making, the principles of public health and management skills for laboratory directors and other senior professionals
- **Technical Assistance:** Solutions to collective and individual challenges confronting laboratories.

In addition to serving public health laboratory professionals, the Center works with health organizations in the public and private sectors and government laboratories.

The NCPHLL works with health organizations in the public and private sectors and government laboratories on a fee for service basis. The NCPHLL has conducted a number of laboratory assessments addressing issues including:

- Facility structure and capacity
- Work load allocations
- Space allocation
- Testing Menu adequacy
- Review of information systems
- Staffing ratios
- Organizational structure
- Projected workforce need versus capacity
- Service relationships between the lab and program areas, division, commission
- Renovation versus new facility construction options
- Evaluation of revenue generation, budget management
- Expertise of specially identified areas of significance; e.g., security, current trends, comparative standards, technical operations, support services, instrumentation
- Leadership development
- Strategic planning

Projects are planned and sourced on a project-specific basis. Projects are typically negotiated through a mutually agreed upon definition of scope and refined statement of work. References available upon request.



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