# Minutes: AMD ELC Informational Call

March 30, 2016

Information about the Training capacity portion:

The purpose of the workforce development portion of the AMD ELC announcement is to support training in Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) and bioinformatics. This training is meant to supplement that of program-specific training, e.g. for PulseNet, flu, TB, etc, which is much more focused and much more applied. CDC acknowledges that the public health laboratories are in the best position to choose training appropriate for your labs and staff. A sample curriculum based on experience in training at CDC can be found [here](http://www.aphl.org/Materials/Sample-curriculum-PHL-Bioinformatics-Course-Options.pdf). This curriculum is not mandatory, but might be useful for state and local laboratories in designing curricula tailored to their particular context. Laboratories are encouraged to form regional networks and work in collaboration with other academic partners. In some cases, pre-existing networks already provide a platform for organizing these trainings. It is expected that not all states will be funded in this training cycle, but those not funded this year will be able to apply next year and the year after that. APHL will hold a working group for the laboratories selected as training leads in order to help facilitate collaboration of information and materials developed for these training networks.

Questions:

 Q - Can funds be requested for personnel?

A – Yes, but states should be aware that there is no guarantee of continuation of funding past year 5 of the AMD budget.

Q – Will there be preference to laboratories who have pre-existing funds with NGS? And where should laboratories who need funding for infrastructure apply?

A – No, there is no preference for funding larger labs with pre-existing NGS and bioinformatics infrastructure. Note that NARMS is reportedly planning to fund extension of NGS equipment to many states this year.

Information about the AMD Capacity portion:

CDC is attempting to expand the technologies and use of AMD in public health laboratories. The purpose of this portion is to encompass other uses and programs of AMD that are not included with other funding opportunities. Proposals that include new uses of the AMD within existing programs may be considered. For example, laboratories that wish to use the GHOST program for Hepatitis C sequencing could submit a proposal within this section and be funded in part through this portion.

 Questions:

 Q – Any plans to develop guidance on validation?

A – Most validation work has been done in program specific areas such as Pulsenet, TB, etc. There is a subject matter group at CDC looking at developing quality standards and other standards that will be useful in implementing NGS.

Q – Is CDC working on technologies to do sequencing from clinical samples rather than isolates? If a lab is interested in helping with this in particular with TB, how do they get do this?

A – Yes, however, they are facing some challenges. Both TB groups and food (Pulsenet) groups are currently working on this. The TB problem is an easier one technologically, and a lot of progress has been made. The foodborne disease one (i.e., sequencing pathogens directly from stool specimens using metagenomics) is much more challenging, and we’re looking at incremental advances at this point. Labs interested in including a metagenomics component in their application are encouraged to consult with the respective labs at CDC.

Laboratories needing assistance in forming a network can contact Christin Hanigan. For any further questions, contact information for both APHL and CDC contacts are below.

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