

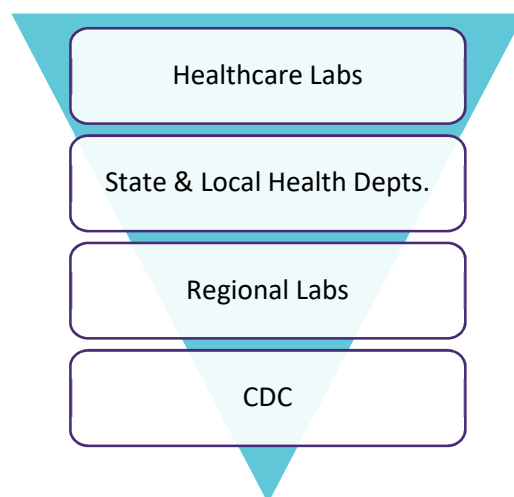


Dear Laboratory Partner,

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health would like to take this opportunity to ensure you are aware of a new effort funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to combat antimicrobial resistance (AR). In the fall of 2016, CDC launched the Antibiotic Resistance Laboratory Network, or AR Lab Network. The AR Lab Network is a comprehensive laboratory capacity network consisting of the CDC, seven regional laboratories, a National Tuberculosis Molecular Surveillance Center, state public health laboratories, hospital and other healthcare facility laboratories all working together to improve testing capacity for antimicrobial-resistant, difficult to treat pathogens such as carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE) and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA), *Candida* species including *C. auris*, *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, and other pathogens associated with healthcare-associated infections.

The regional labs, in particular, will:

- Help to ensure more consistent and improved communications
- Provide coordination for the tracking of AR threats across healthcare facilities, state health departments, and CDC
- Work with participating hospital, state public health, and other laboratories to conduct specialized antimicrobial resistance testing
- Share generated data at no-cost to participating laboratories
- Provide free shipping for specimens submitted to the regional laboratories by participating hospital and clinical laboratories



In return for your participation, valuable, real-time actionable data is returned to your facility and local public health authorities and is also gathered on a national scale to monitor and create pathogen-specific solutions for emerging threats, support outbreak response, and provide better data for stronger infection control and prevention measures against these infections – all to help save lives.

Your state public health laboratory will begin soliciting samples for regional laboratory testing beginning in November 2019. More specific information on how to submit specimens for each of the testing capacities will be provided soon. Please feel free to view the latest updates on the CDC's AR Lab Network and other initiatives for combatting antibiotic resistance (<http://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/solutions-initiative/ar-lab-networks.html>).

We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to share specimens and gather valuable data not only for your facility, but also for the nationwide effort to combat antimicrobial resistance and prevent healthcare-associated infections.

Sincerely,

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