

Strengthening Response to Public Health Threats through Expanded Laboratory Testing and Access to Data

Public-private partnerships equip CDC to rapidly scale up testing during a public health emergency and access laboratory data on over 200 reportable health conditions

Background

CDC is awarding contracts that will significantly bolster the United States' ability to respond to public health emergencies through securing additional nationwide testing capacity and data reporting for new and emerging health threats.

Why It Matters

Strengthening collaboration with public- and private-sector laboratory partners is essential for timely and effective national response to public health emergencies. The contracts help ensure the nation can rapidly scale up diagnostic testing efforts during emergencies, delivering timely and accurate results to meet heightened demand. **The contracts not only strengthen our emergency response, but also gives CDC and its partners a clearer picture of illnesses that affect communities across America and the ability to respond faster to health threats and protect lives.**

Contract Details

The contracts include two primary components:

- Building testing capacity for new and emerging pathogens to enhance our ability to rapidly respond to public health threats, such as highly pathogenic avian influenza A(H5N1) virus. Specifically, in collaboration with CDC, laboratories would be able to begin testing immediately, performing 10,000 tests per week at the beginning of a response. If needed, these same laboratories could scale to over 100,000 tests per week over a short period of time.
- Enhancing access to critical clinical laboratory data across more than 200 reportable conditions to support ongoing situational awareness for the country.

The following organizations with laboratories have been selected to support this work over the next 5 years: Aegis, ARUP, Ginko Bioworks, Labcorp and Quest.

These new contracts create more flexibility for CDC to access clinical laboratory data and work with these laboratories when needed for specific new and emerging pathogens based on their testing and data sharing capacity.

Accelerating Data Modernization

Earlier this year, CDC released its updated [Public Health Data Strategy](#), which outlines the data, technology, policy, and administrative actions essential to address challenges in data exchange. **With the execution of these contracts, CDC moves closer to fulfilling one of the 2024 strategy's milestones of expanding access to commercial laboratory data.** Establishing a sustainable path to ensure public health agencies receive essential data (e.g., laboratory order and result data) is vital to strengthening the core of public health data and situational awareness.

Partnering with Laboratories for Readiness and Response

Recent infectious disease outbreaks and public health emergencies highlighted the importance of private sector laboratory diagnostic testing as a core capability of the U.S. public health system—especially at the beginning of emergency responses when there is a greater demand for laboratory testing to rapidly detect and respond to new and emerging health threats.