REPORT OF THE USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK (NAHLN)

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The Committee met on October 20, 2013 at the Town and Country, San Diego, California, from 1:00 to 2:20 p.m. There were 19 members and 28 guests present.

NAHLN Update
Beth Lautner, USDA-NVSL

The National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) Concept paper received 42 comments. They will be responding and then moving forward with Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) posting. Comments were supportive and expressed concerns about funding and terminology (calling the laboratories "levels" which some thought could be confusing). There is a specialty laboratories section included in the concept paper. Aquaculture is being included in the NAHLN.

    a. Methods Technical Working Group
    b. Validation studies were completed inter-laboratory comparison and cohort studies on milk tanks and moving forward with pen-side tests. FMD serology tests are also targeted for validation. Pan-H7 testing has been initiated.
    c. Capacity estimation model was developed in partnership with FAZD and deployed to NAHLN laboratories in 2012.
    d. Veterinary Services (VS) reorganization has been delayed to November 3, 2013. National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) and Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) will report to Larry Granger. Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH) and the Office of Interagency Coordination will report to Beth Lautner.
    e. Budget: Continuing resolution (CR) until January. 2014 proposed budget is favorable if approved.

NAHLN Funding Efforts
Brad Mollet, American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Lobbyist

Mr. Mollet discussed that the House budget for FY14 is marked up at $7 million, the Senate at $5.98 million, and also a separate line item in fiscal budget (FB) at $15 million. If approved, we would then need to push for appropriations. AAVLD will visit the Hill in February. The white paper is available for use by anyone visiting with their Congressional representatives.

FAZD Presentation
Keith Biggers and Lindsey Holmstrom, FAZD Center

Engage to Excel (E2E) is an application to support business continuity (supporting continued movement of non-infected animals and products during an outbreak). This is a three year project coupled with Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) to establish linkages with necessary datasets during peacetime so that they are ready to activate following an outbreak. Emphasis is on premises identification number. FAZD conducted a pilot project collecting data from: state animal health officials (SAHO) in Iowa, Iowa State University (ISU), Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL) and an Iowa pork producer. Proof of concept was successful. We will be moving forward with four states: Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, and Kansas

and USAHerds to demonstrate scalability. Key is that FAZD only connects datasets, they do not actually possess any information – all the data continues to reside on the individual databases at the producer, laboratory or SAHO. Value to producers is the ability to access and manipulate their data real-time for multiple sources.

Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI) is an iPad app allowing for the veterinarian to complete a certificate of veterinary inspection on site and submit it electronically.

Enhanced Passive Surveillance (EPS), integrated disease surveillance, is an early disease detection that focuses on syndromic surveillance and is scalable. Cattle and small ruminant pilot projects have been undertaken for a proof of concept. This provides mobile technology that allows practitioners to collect data on-site and electronically submit the information into an established dataset with a common operating system; currently based on an iPad format.

State Animal Lab Messaging Service (SALMS)
Bruce Akey Cornell University

SALMS is laboratory messaging software. It does not store any message content but fills a missing link to facilitate communication between laboratories. Laboratories often can't transmit the data between laboratories, but SALMS provides a secure mechanism to access USDA's Laboratory Messaging System (LMS). SALMS is active and currently available for use. It can send messages between any registered users (including other laboratories, USDA, private practitioners, (state animal health officials (SAHOs), etc). Established conduits include U.S. Animal Laboratory Information Management System (USALIMS) and USAHerds-capable systems. Access to practice management systems is the next goal of the SALMS effort. The ultimate goal is to have the messaging router service convert a message from one format to a different receiving format or serve as a "pass through" for messages regardless of format. There is no cost for the service.

USDA Information Technology (IT)
John Picanso, USDA-APHIS-VS

USDA IT has hired a person on the technical team in Fort Collins to work on existing issues. Laboratory Messaging Services (LMS) replaces NAHLN IT. Swine influenza virus (SIV) results are now going directly to the LMS repository. The ultimate goal is to message any disease result into the LMS which should be functional by spring 2014. There has been much integration and collaboration on many fronts since the 2012 USAHA meeting. We are within a couple of months of being able to bring in National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) data, including working on pseudorabies virus (PRV) and classical swine fever (CSF) through Wildlife Services. USDA is undergoing the second round of testing through veterinary diagnostic laboratories (VDLs) at Iowa State University (ISU) and University of Minnesota (UMN). We are working with Trace First to bring data into USDA platforms. Caveat: standardization is important. Currently we are working on standardization of data exchange mechanisms and also working on publication of data standards.

Methods Technical Working Group (MTWG) Update
Bruce Akey, Cornell University (MTWG co-chair with Sarah Tomlinson)
MTWG was established to define testing technologies/methodologies used in NAHLN laboratories as outlined:
   a) What is the role of the MTW group in emerging disease diagnostics?
   b) Standardization of De Novo (polymerase chain reactions (PCRs) developed from scratch) PCR method development – methodology for validating disease PCR.
   c) Defining guidelines for technical considerations associated with identifying an emerging disease within two weeks and necessary diagnostics. What is the NAHLN's role?
   d) Consideration of concerns regarding using NAHLN PCR methods for non-target testing.

Committee Business:
Dr. Powers updated the committee on the success of previous resolutions particularly regarding obtaining Congressional support for NAHLN funding.

The Committee considered a resolution from the Committee on Diagnostic Laboratory and Veterinary Workforce Development (DLVWD) entitled National Diagnostic Laboratory and Veterinary Workforce

Assessment. The Committee made some minor wording changes and moved to approve the amended resolution. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.