

## **NPHL Updates**

*By Steven Hinrichs, MD, Director, NPHL*

This edition of our newsletter marks another milestone in the development of the NPHL as well as provides an update on the topical issues of respiratory infections and their prevention. Dr. Peter Iwen has assumed the duties of Editor-in-Chief of the newsletter and his role in the laboratory continues to grow. Pete is well known throughout Nebraska for his expertise in clinical microbiology and throughout the US as an expert in mycology. He has written numerous research articles and reviews on the topic of fungal infections and has developed molecular assays to assist in their diagnosis. In addition, we are pleased to introduce Karen Stiles as our new State Training Coordinator and newsletter editor. Karen brings a great familiarity with the state to her new role in addition to long experience as a microbiologist working in the clinical laboratory. Josh Rowland, our previous editor, has taken a position with the Association of Public Health Laboratories with the responsibility for developing educational opportunities nationally. This coming on the heels of Beth Schweitzer and Tricia Aden assuming important laboratory positions at the national levels is evidence for the quality of training and experience obtained in Nebraska.

Whether you call it “swine flu” or Influenza A 2009 H1N1v, the summer and fall have been a challenge for everyone. The article by Tony Sambol summarizes information we collected on the controversial performance of rapid flu antigen assays during this year. If we can answer any questions regarding testing procedures for the influenza virus, you are welcome to give us a call. But influenza is not the only new virus circulating as you will read in the article on Metapneumovirus. We also provide background on the topic of respiratory protection with a short summary of the terms and technology used in respirators and masks. These topics are intended to help you stay healthy.