

NPHL Updates

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This issue of the NPHL newsletter contains two topics of specific importance to clinical laboratories as well as clinical partners regarding the role that all laboratories play in the submission of bacterial and viral isolates for epidemiologic surveillance purposes. The NPHL uses the bacterial isolates for multiple different functions including confirmation of antibiotic resistance and emergence of new antibiotic resistance patterns. The viral isolates are particularly important this time of season for determining which strains of influenza virus A are circulating in our population. The NPHL selects appropriate samples from different geographic areas of the state and submits them to the CDC as part of the World Health Organization's influenza surveillance program. The CDC performs subtyping tests on these specimens to determine whether they are the subtype in the vaccine or new subtypes introduced into our population. If they are found to be new and are present in multiple places across North America, these isolates will be included in next year's vaccine. The second important topic involves an issue in the news and that is the contamination of peanut butter by a specific strain of salmonella called *Salmonella* serotype Tennessee. The NPHL first identified this strain in November and after the CDC posted the molecular fingerprint, we were able to confirm that the Nebraska isolates were from the same outbreak. You will also be interested in the featured laboratorian who is Jolene Smith from Faith Regional Health Services in Norfolk. Taken together, these articles illustrate again that everyone is a public health laboratorian.