

The Association for Molecular Pathology calls for enhanced communication and collaboration between state and local public health laboratories and molecular pathology laboratories to combat the swine influenza A (H1N1) outbreak

BETHESDA, MD – April 30, 2009 - As the nation faces the ongoing public health challenges of a new circulating strain of influenza, the Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP) encourages close collaboration between molecular diagnostics laboratories, CDC, and public health laboratories to ensure prompt diagnosis and timely surveillance of the outbreak. AMP's members are physicians, doctoral scientists and medical technologists with expertise in developing, validating and providing laboratory tests based on molecular methods. They have the education and training to offer high quality molecular diagnostic testing for influenza and extensive experience providing clinical testing for seasonal influenza.

As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the state and local public health laboratories continue to provide monitoring for the circulating H1N1 strain of influenza, AMP requests that they initiate and engage in active communication with clinical molecular diagnostics laboratories and leverage their expertise and testing capabilities. AMP members are uniquely qualified to process samples from patients and to interpret tests to help detect and identify the H1N1 strain of influenza

Dr. Jan Nowak, President of AMP, further identifies the ability of molecular pathology laboratories to aid in this public health emergency, " While the CDC and public health labs have experience with epidemiological testing and surveillance, AMP's members have a wealth of experience in developing and performing molecular diagnostic tests used for patient screening and diagnosis, and therefore can markedly reduce the burden on public health laboratories. The challenges of the current outbreak can best be met with close collaboration and the efficient use of available resources. We need to work together to monitor the outbreak and rapidly identify new cases right at the clinical setting."

AMP also encourages the CDC and public health laboratories to collaborate with clinical molecular pathology laboratories to validate their laboratory developed influenza tests for H1N1 detection. AMP's members stand ready to assist public health laboratories in meeting the increasing surveillance needs within their communities.

About AMP

The Association for Molecular Pathology is an international medical professional association dedicated to the advancement, practice, and science of clinical molecular laboratory medicine and translational research based on the applications of molecular biology, genetics and genomics. Through the efforts of an enthusiastic membership from across the United States and around the world, AMP continues to grow in numbers and influence. The organization is divided into the scientific subdivisions of genetics, infectious diseases, hematopathology, and solid tumors. Each subdivision addresses issues, identifies goals, shapes policy, and provides member benefits specific to that particular discipline. The AMP membership includes individuals from academic medical centers, independent laboratories, government, and industry, including physicians, laboratory directors, scientists, medical technologists, and trainees. AMP members populate the majority of clinical molecular diagnostic laboratories in the United States.

AMP members are at the forefront of the development and implementation of novel molecular diagnostic tests, whether these are laboratory developed or commercially developed. AMP promotes molecular testing that is consistent with the highest standards established by CLIA, the College of American Pathologists (CAP), the American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG), and FDA. AMP members proudly accept their responsibilities in assessing the analytical validity, clinical validity, clinical utility, and the clinical utilization of molecular tests for each specific patient.

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