

Public Health Laboratories Network

Vision

The vision that guides the development of the network of Central and Regional Public Health Laboratories is to create a modern and scientifically sound mechanism to defend and protect the health of all the people living in Greece. At the same time, this mechanism will support the National Strategy for Public Health and the overall national health policy based on the most current scientific data and harmonized with the principles and framework of the World Health Organization and the Public Health Policy of the European Union.

Objective

The aim of the Network of Public Health Laboratories is to develop and organize a laboratory network throughout the country for surveillance of all environmental risks and threats. Other aims include the collection of reliable and valid information concerning public health and promotion of good quality of life.

History

The Central Public Health Laboratory was founded in 1920 and operated as a unit of the Ministry of Health, subject to the General Directorate of Public Health. Key milestones:

- The relevance of the CPHL was approved by the HCDCP under law 3370, in 2005
- Regional Public Health Laboratories were established under law 2519/1997
- Some units of the HCDCP were decentralized under law 3370/2005 and were inter-connected with the Central

Public Health Laboratory.

- In October 2008, HCDCP administration signed an agreement with the National School of Public Health regarding scientific and technological support of the Central Public Health Laboratory and Regional Public Health Laboratories. The agreement was renewed in July 2010.
- The Central Public Health Laboratory, previously located in the National School of Public Health building on Alexandra Avenue, moved to its own modern facilities at Vari, Athens in September 2009.

Basic framework for activities and functions

CPHL

- Maintenance and distribution of vaccines, serum and biological products to all health services in the country.
- Coordination, supervision and control of regional public health laboratories.

CPHL– RPHL

- Control, monitoring, diagnosis, prevention and solution of important sanitary and epidemiological problems throughout the country by microbiological monitoring of drinking and bottled water, recreational water, food, drinks, organic products and environmental factors.
- Laboratory epidemiological surveillance for public health purposes.
- Research activities.
- Training of the staff that works in Public Health.
- Collaboration and communication between services in the Public Health domain, strategic alliances between authorities.

Summary report of the CPHL activities, 2011

In 2011 was the second full year of operation of the network with the launch of yet another laboratory, Regional Public Health Laboratory (RPHL) of South Aegean, based in Rhodes. Simultaneously, in 2011 moved the accreditation process in Regional Public Health Laboratory (RPHL) of Thessaly and Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, and extension of accreditation to additional methods of analysis Central Public Health Laboratory (CPHL).

The network currently performs 41 methods accredited testing of all 236 analyzes carried out.

During the year were the work required to operate Regional Public Health Laboratory (RPHL) of Central Macedonia and Epirus. Also a cooperation agreement with the EFET (Hellenic Food Authority) was signed.

The Network participated in the Working Group for the formulation of a Single Food Control System set up by the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity.

Notable activities undertaken in 2011:

- The 1st Workshop of the Network of Public Health Laboratories (PHNL), October 7th.
- The 2nd and 3rd Meeting of the PHNL on the 21st March and on the 6th October.
- The monitoring and control of test samples of food and water sports facilities and accommodation used during the time of preparation and conduct of the Special Olympics in our country.
- The hosting of training course on Biosafety organized by members of the ECDC-BRICK project
- The hospitality of the School courses Disinfect the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity in the auditorium of the building, lasting 8 weeks.

- The Conference of Medical and Veterinary Microbiological Laboratory for Antimicrobial Resistance, on April 8th.

Central Public Health Laboratory (CPHL)

Vaccines Department

The vaccines department is responsible for the storage, maintenance, transportation and disposal for all health services in the country of vaccines, serums and related biological product. In 2011 the CPHL conducted shipments at the Departments of Health and Social Care Regional Units, at all vaccination centers provided by “*Kallikratis*” Program and Regional Health Units.

The following table shows the activity of the department which is higher than the previous year due to the increase in the number of vaccination centers provided by Kallikratis Program and due to the increasing range of vaccines that were distributed in 2011.

Vaccine Shipments			Serum – Tuberculins Shipments			Total Shipments		
2010	2011		2010	2011		2010	2011	
47.144 d.	154.278 d.	+228%	43.427 d.	79.228 d.	+82%	394	708	+80%

For the first time at the end of the year we apply a new statistic and administrative system to follow up the inventory and distribution of vaccines from all Health Services and the various organizations.

The department has also acquired a refrigerator car with specific requirements for the intended distribution and maintenance of cold chain for vaccines and biological agents.

During the year all the necessary steps and preparation to proceed with the accreditation for storage and handling.

Departments of Laboratory Tests

The CPHL conducted 30,953 tests on 9,446 samples.

Percentage increase 27.30% compared to the number of samples of 2010 (7420).

The scientific staff of the CPHL during 2011 participated in:

- 3 nationwide conferences where 3 oral and 2 written announcements were presented
- 3 international conferences in which a total of 7 projects and 1 poster, which also won the prize for Best Poster were presented
- 8 TV interviews with the prevention of accidents, choking and first aid
- 8 lectures accident prevention and first aid at events and other organizations CPHL
- in international journals with 6 posts
- a qualifying holding in National, international and world congresses physical education and prevention of accidents with 25 papers (oral and poster)