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Laboratory Professionals Week: There's a lab for that!
52 Weeks of Public Health Campaign Spotlight: Laboratory Services

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 26, 2017) – As part of the 52 Weeks of Public Health campaign, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH), within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), is promoting the impact of the Public Health Laboratory. The Kentucky Division of Laboratory Services partners with community, state, and federal health entities, including local health departments in every Kentucky county, to prevent and control global health threats such as influenza, tuberculosis and emerging infectious diseases such as Ebola and Zika.

“Our labs screen more than 55,000 Kentucky newborns each year for genetic and metabolic disorders that must be treated soon after birth to prevent lifelong disability or death,” said Dr. Jeremy Hart, Kentucky Public Health Laboratory Director. “In 2016 alone, we saved or improved the lives of 66 babies who were identified by testing and received early intervention.”

In addition, Laboratory Services assures the safety of water, air, and manufactured and fresh food products through testing for chemical, biological or radiological agents and other contaminants. The lab constantly monitors for outbreaks of foodborne diseases through a national network called PulseNet, comparing the molecular fingerprints of foodborne pathogens to halt outbreaks quickly.

The Kentucky Division of Laboratory Services and its scientists ascribe to a culture of quality, continually striving to improve operations. Their efforts extend to communities across Kentucky by sponsoring specialized training, sending updates concerning health threats, sharing information on best practices, and conducting applied research to develop enhanced testing methods. Here are links to two animated shorts that you may use free and unrestricted; <https://vimeo.com/52548635>, <https://vimeo.com/164152250>

Throughout the planned 52 Weeks of Public Health promotion, DPH will spotlight a specific public health issue. Additional information about the campaign is available on the DPH website: <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/default.htm> and is posted on the CHFS Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/kychfs> where Kentuckians are encouraged to like and share posts among their networks of friends.

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services, the Department for Public Health, and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.