



## **The Laboratory Response Network: Partners in Preparedness**

### **History**

The Laboratory Response Network (LRN) was established by the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in accordance with Presidential Decision Directive 39, which outlined national anti-terrorism policies and assigned specific missions to federal departments and agencies.

Through a collaborative effort involving LRN founding partners, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Association of Public Health Laboratories, the LRN became operational in August 1999. Its objective was to ensure an effective laboratory response to bioterrorism by helping to improve the nation's public health laboratory infrastructure, which had limited ability to respond to bioterrorism.

Today, the LRN is charged with the task of maintaining an integrated network of state and local public health, federal, military, and international laboratories that can respond to bioterrorism, chemical terrorism and other public health emergencies. The LRN is a unique asset in the nation's growing preparedness for biological and chemical terrorism. The linking of state and local public health laboratories, veterinary, agriculture, military, and water- and food-testing laboratories is unprecedented.

In the years since its creation, the LRN has played an instrumental role in improving the public health infrastructure by helping to boost laboratory capacity. Laboratories are better equipped, their staff levels are increasing, and laboratories are employing advanced technologies.

Public health infrastructure refers to essential public health services, including the people who work in the field of public health, information and communication systems used to collect and disseminate accurate data, and public health organizations at the state and local levels.

### **LRN Mission**

The Laboratory Response Network (LRN) and its partners will maintain an integrated national and international network of laboratories that are fully equipped to respond quickly to acts of chemical or biological terrorism, emerging infectious diseases, and other public health threats and emergencies

For more information, visit [www.bt.cdc.gov/lrn](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/lrn),  
or call CDC at 800-CDC-INFO (English and Spanish) or 888-232-6348 (TTY).

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