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State of Nevada  
Department of Health and  
Human Services

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Overview of the State's  
Laboratory Reporting System

Richard Whitley, Director



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*Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.*

# Overview

Laboratory data ensures public officials have access to comprehensive data to inform decision making in response to COVID-19



# Regulatory Authority

Laboratories must comply with all of Nevada's regulations including the reporting requirement for communicable disease in NAC 441A.235

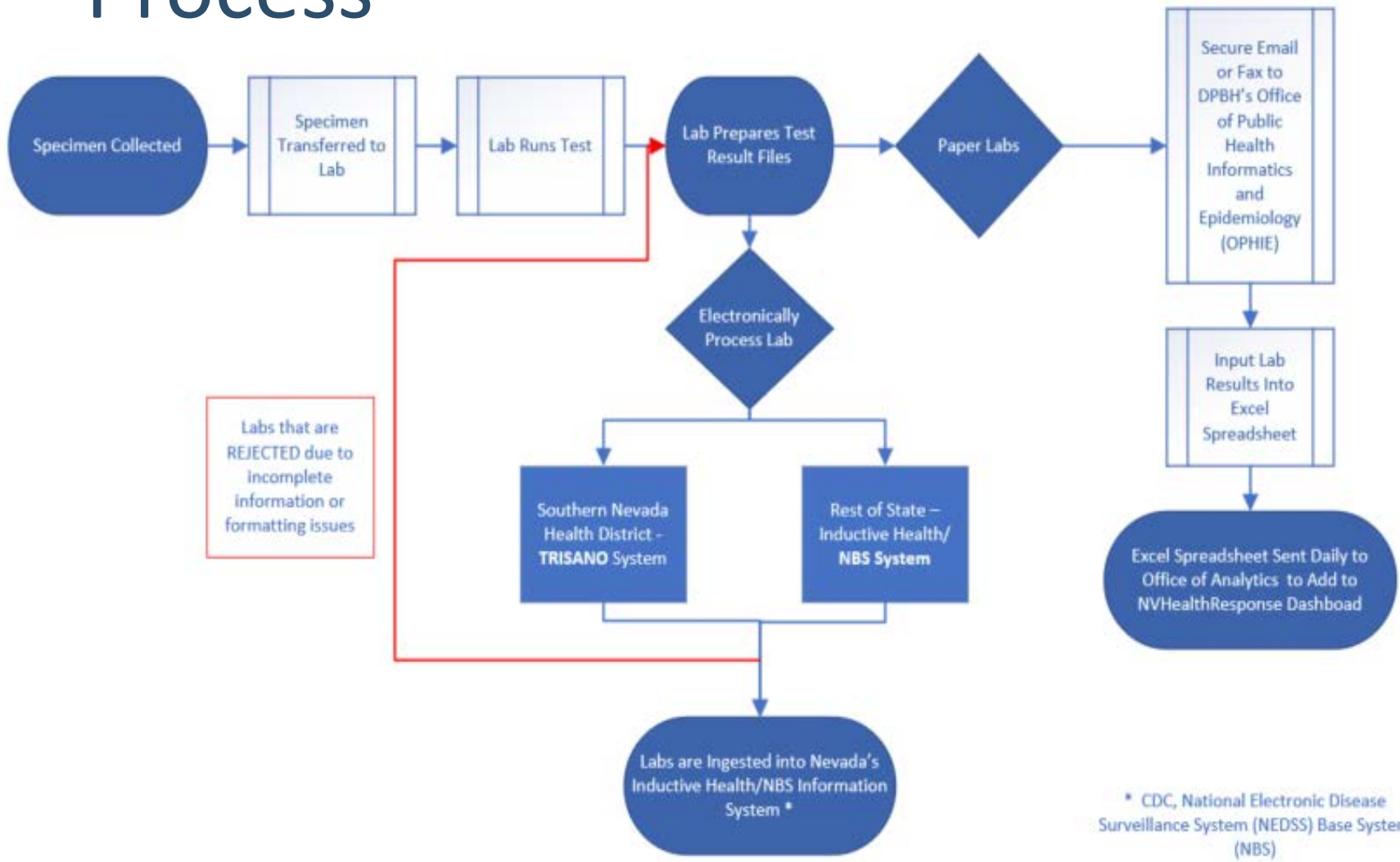
- NAC 441A.235: Duty of director or other person in charge of medical laboratory to report findings of communicable disease, causative agent of communicable disease or immune response to causative agent; contents of report; submission of certain microbiologic cultures, subcultures, or other specimen or clinical material; required reporting of results of certain tests relating to human immunodeficiency virus. ([NRS 439.200](#), [441A.120](#), [441A.167](#))

The Department licenses labs and has regulatory authority for enforcement:

- NRS 652.080: License requirements
- NAC 652.491: Grounds for denial, suspension or revocation of certificate. (NRS 439.200, 652.125)
- NAC 652.530: Disciplinary action



# Nevada's Current Lab Reporting Process

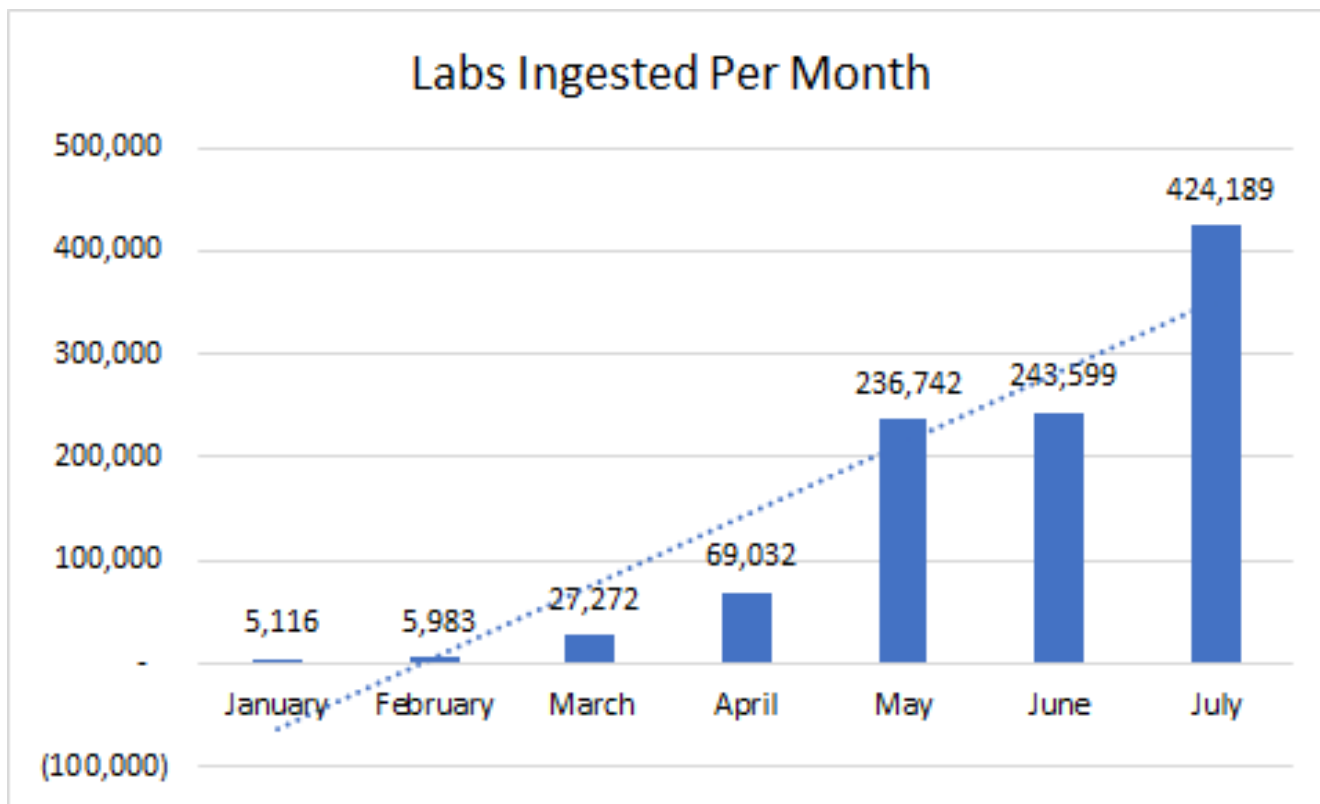


\* CDC, National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS) Base System (NBS)



# Labs Processed from January to July 2020 increased 8200%

Prior to COVID-19, the average number of labs processed was approximately 5,000 per month\*



\*All reportable laboratory testing in Nevada



# Error Rate – Labs failing to import, January & July 2020

- January 2020: 0.1%
  - 5 out of 5,116
- July 2020: 0.2%
  - 9,619 out of 424,189
- IT support
  - As of August 7, IT staff are examining every instance of import error into NBS to mitigate future errors
  - Recommendation to provide SNHD support to examine data ingestion errors into TriSano



# Advantages and Weaknesses Nevada's Current Electronic Lab Reporting System

## Advantages

ELR vendor has upgraded system to automatically de-duplicate lab reports

NV has surpassed the CDC's requirement of testing 2% of the population (~61,600 tests)

- In July, NV had 424,000 test results reported which is about 7 times the CDC goal

ELR vendor has made several changes to system that has addressed backlog. There has not been a backlog since August 7, 2020

## Weaknesses

No direct link to/from NV labs or out-of-state labs to NBS

Community businesses contract with labs without notification and coordination with DPBH to ensure we receive information

SNHD and the rest of the state use two different ELR systems

Current IT staff infrastructure not to scale for IT platform

Laboratories have increased staff and testing capacity rapidly that has resulted in some coding errors and correlating failed uploads to the ELR

New COVID-19 tests are continually being developed and if the lab does not use the test "code" the ELR vendor is familiar with this could result in missed lab tests not being counted

Combination of electronic lab reporting and paper lab reporting



# Three Factors Impacting Nevada's Laboratory Reporting

- Commercial labs experiencing delays in processing and transmitting electronic labs
- Nevada's electronic lab reporting system
- Unlicensed and/or out-of-state lab companies





# Recommendation

- Utilize regulatory authority to require all laboratories doing business in Nevada to be licensed.
- Impose penalties for failure to report.
- Increase IT staff to support SNHD data ingestion into their electronic lab reporting system TriSano
- Develop and promote a webpage dedicated to providing information on:
  - Lab reporting
  - Contact info for ELR staff
  - Forms for ELR
  - Description of penalties if labs are not reporting timely
  - Reciprocity of other states – labs





# Questions?





# Contact Information

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# Acronyms

- CDC – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- DPBH – Division of Public and Behavioral Health
- ELR - Electronic Lab Reporting
- IT - Information technology
- NBS - National Electronic Disease Surveillance Based System
- SHI – Software House International
- SNHD - Southern Nevada Health District
- TB - Technical Bulletin

