



# \$1.26M Earmarked in Federal Budget for UNH's NH Veterinary Diagnostic Lab

## Funds will help NHVDL to expand capacity and reach strategic goals

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EACH YEAR, THE NHVDL RECEIVES TENS OF THOUSANDS OF SAMPLES FROM PETS, FARM ANIMALS, WILDLIFE, RESEARCH, AQUATIC AND ZOO ANIMALS AROUND THE COUNTRY.

For more than five decades, the New Hampshire Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (NHVDL) at the UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture has helped secure animal and public health by providing essential diagnostic services to the Granite State and New England. The NHVDL also provides valuable training to UNH students in the medical laboratory, veterinary and

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Quality test results require that accurate temperatures be maintained and documented to ensure the proper functioning of test procedures and storage of reagents/specimens. In October the NHVDL i

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STEM disciplines—experience that these students bring to the workforce and advanced degree programs.

Now, thanks in large part to the [support of Sen. Jeanne Shaheen \(NH-D\)](#), the NHVDL will receive \$1.26 million in federal appropriations to expand their diagnostic services and capacity to safeguard the region from emerging infectious disease threats.

Each year, the NHVDL receives tens of thousands of samples from pets, farm animals, wildlife, research, aquatic and zoo animals around the country. This recent federal appropriation will help solidify the lab's quality assurance program and bring its staffing to a level needed to pursue full accreditation with the [American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians](#) and membership in the [National Animal Health Laboratory Network \(NAHLN\)](#). Membership in the network would allow the NHVDL to support infectious disease diagnostic testing in New Hampshire and northern New England—areas where the lack of official NAHLN testing providers poses a significant challenge, particularly with foreign and other high consequence diseases, said Rob Gibson, managing director of the lab.

“This will be a transformative period for the lab, building capacity and resiliency and securing a level of accreditation that represents the dedication our diagnosticians and staff bring to the many veterinary clients and stakeholders that rely on our services.” ~ [Rob Gibson](#), NHVDL Managing Director

“I am extremely grateful that Senator Shaheen was able to secure these funds,” said Gibson. “This will be a transformative period for the lab, building capacity and resiliency and securing a level of accreditation that represents the dedication our diagnosticians

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and staff bring to the many veterinary clients and stakeholders that rely on our services.”

The lab's board-certified veterinary pathologists and staff play an integral role in the education of future animal care professionals and scientists across various disciplines. Students in [COLSA's highly successful pre-veterinary program](#) receive hands-on training at the NHVDL, where they use state-of-the-art equipment and build the skills necessary to address workforce shortages in the medical laboratory fields. Additionally, the NHVDL faculty teach courses and serve as academic advisors to students considering careers in veterinary medicine.

“Expanding the NHVDL’s capacity offers our undergraduate and graduate students more ways to develop the skills necessary to safeguard our animal communities and to quickly enter a highly skilled workforce.”

~ [Anthony Davis](#), Dean of COLSA

"Students attending UNH have long had access to meaningful, hands-on work that complements their academic pursuits," said COLSA Dean Anthony Davis. "Expanding the NHVDL’s capacity offers our undergraduate and graduate students more ways to develop the skills necessary to safeguard our animal communities and to quickly enter a highly skilled workforce.”

Founded in 1971, the NHVDL is jointly managed by UNH and by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food (NHDAMF). The lab works closely with local, state and federal agencies, among them, USDA, NH Veterinary Medical Association, New Hampshire Fish and Game, and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services.

“NHVDL plays a critical role in the early and

rapid diagnosis of highly contagious and consequential diseases in New Hampshire-resident animals, as well as those living across New England.” ~ [Stephen Crawford](#), State Veterinarian for the State of New Hampshire

“NHVDL plays a critical role in the early and rapid diagnosis of highly contagious and consequential diseases in New Hampshire-resident animals, as well as those living across New England,” said Stephen Crawford, New Hampshire state veterinarian. “Many of these diseases, such as brucellosis and avian influenza, pose significant threats to agricultural species, human health and the economy.”

“The lab is also sentinel for the many foreign and emerging animal diseases, such as African swine fever and foot-and-mouth disease, which pose significant threats to the entire U.S.,” he added.

The NHVDL receives funding from the NHDAMF; UNH; federal grants; federal cooperative agreement funds through NHDAMF; fees for services and private donor funds.

[Learn more about the NHVDL online.](#)

**About the NH Veterinary Diagnostic Lab:** NHVDL serves the state of New Hampshire by providing accessible, timely, and accurate diagnostic services for the [New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food](#); [New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services](#); [New Hampshire Fish and Game Department](#); state and local law enforcement agencies; veterinarians; farmers; and other relevant state, regional, and federal agencies. It is co-funded and co-managed by the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food and the [NH Agricultural Experiment Station](#) and administered within the

University of [New Hampshire College of Life Sciences and Agriculture](#). The lab has served the state and the university since 1970, working at the junction of animal health, public health, environmental health, and economic health.

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