



# ApolloLIMS Empowers County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Laboratory to Improve Interoperability



## ▲ CASE STUDY

San Luis Obispo County Public Health Laboratory provides clinical and environmental testing to the county public health agency as well as local hospitals, clinics, physicians, private businesses, citizens, and local, State and Federal authorities. Nestled in the city of San Luis Obispo on the coast of California, the lab has 12 employees and boasts a large test menu: tuberculosis, STIs (sexually transmitted infections), communicable diseases, rabies, ocean water, waste water and shellfish. Much of their focus is on STI testing with community based organizations. The lab has been working with ApolloLIMS since 2006.

When Laboratory Director Dr. James Beebe came to the lab over 10 years ago, much of the ordering and reporting was done by paper. Dr. Beebe set about to oversee the building of an electronic system that could reduce the paper consumption, improve efficiency and increase accuracy. That is where ApolloLIMS was able to help.

With over 20 years of industry experience, ApolloLIMS assists laboratories to meet their automation goals. ApolloLIMS is a world class Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), designed for performance and flexibility and controls day to day workflow including specimen processing, testing and reporting. The ApolloLIMS line of software is being used in a variety of laboratory settings such as Public Health, Molecular, Toxicology, and Clinical.

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**“We have built a great partnership with Apollo. ApolloLIMS is our hub to connect to all of our partners. There is nothing these guys can’t do.”**

- Dr. James Beebe  
Laboratory Director

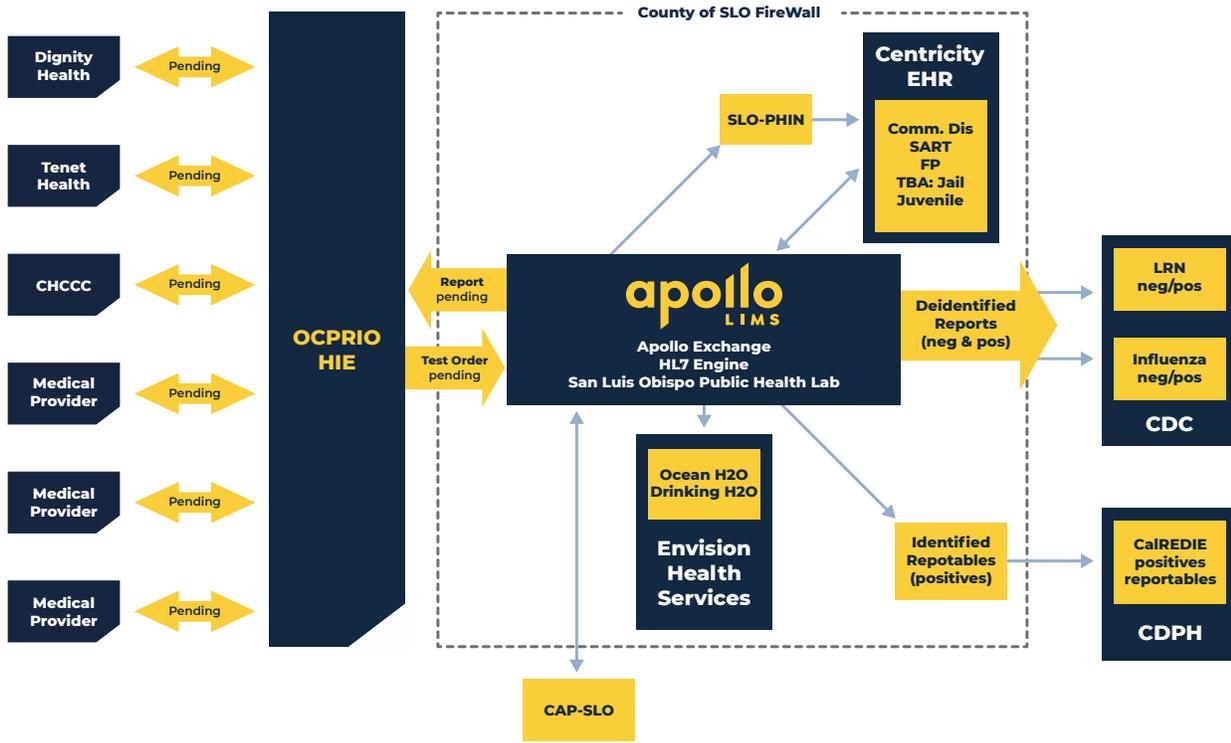
The Apollo eXchange module allows the laboratory to build a communication bridge to or from external systems. Apollo has adopted HL7 as the principal format when connecting to another system. With Apollo eXchange internal system codes can be translated to several standard coding systems such as LOINC and SNOMED. San Luis Obispo Public Health lab utilizes these HL7 eXchanges to connect ApolloLIMS to several of the lab's partners; receiving orders and/or sending the lab results in a timely manner. With communication bridges to hospitals and doctor offices and results in the LIMS, the lab is better able to track outbreaks of community health problems like the outbreak of salmonella or the flu, and report those results to the appropriate authority.

The SLOPHL now has two instruments interfaced to ApolloLIMS as well as five Apollo eXchange interfaces; this means the staff now doesn't have to reenter the results from their testing instruments into other systems and has the ability to send the verified results to the necessary partner. This saves time and increases the accuracy of the information.

Below are examples of the partnerships that the Apollo eXchange module helps in facilitating.

- **CDC's PHLIP and LIMS<sub>i</sub> Programs** – all test results performed for the Laboratory Response Network including influenza testing as well as biothreat agent testing are reported electronically.
- **SLO PHIN** – This interface allows select results of communicable disease testing to be sent as an alert to communicable disease staff and to provide a confidential morbidity report (CMR).
- **CaIREDIE** - The lab can automatically report results of any positive test to the communicable disease program at the California State Health Department.
- **eClinical Works EMR** - The bi-directional interface allows the lab to get orders from and send results to the Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo. The Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County is committed to eliminating the causes of poverty by empowering low-income individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency through a wide array of community-based collaborations and programs.
- **Centricity EHR** -The bi-directional interface connects all Public Health Clinics with the lab.

# ▲ APOLLOLIMS at the San Luis Obispo Public Health Lab



San Luis Obispo Diagram Key

- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>CHCCC</b> Community Health Centers of the Central Coast                            | <b>CAP-SLO</b> Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County | <b>CDC</b> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention                          | <b>CDPH</b> California Department of Public Health                |
| <b>OCPRIO</b> One California Partnership Regional Healthcare Information Organization | <b>SART</b> Suspected Abuse Response Team                             | <b>LRN</b> Laboratory Response Network   | <b>SLO-PHIN</b> San Luis Obispo Public Health Information Network |
| <b>HIE</b> Health Information Exchange  | <b>FP</b> Family Planning   | <b>Cal REDIE</b> California Reportable Electronic Disease Information Exchange |   |

## And what is the result of all of these interfaces for one county public health lab?

Fully 60% of their orders come in and results go out electronically. The ability to have a one hour TAT for molecular amplification panels makes the SLO PHL a more competitive lab option in its community. Urgent Care Centers, community providers and hospital staff are now seeking the SLO public health lab to do their testing so they have results sooner than a send out to a reference lab out of state. This all translates to an increase in the number of tests that can be done every day, the array of tests that the lab is able to offer and the communities and citizens the lab can serve. In addition, it boosts the number of patients that have a diagnosis within a day of seeing the doctor, and increases the number of patients that can start being treated sooner.



And these are just the beginning; Dr. Beebe is looking forward to more potential interfaces with community hospitals and other community partners as well as interfacing with their environmental health partners.

“ApolloLIMS is helping us to become a one-stop shop for all testing. We will be able to connect to our community hospitals and medical providers, the CDC, as well as our Environmental Health Services so more than 90% of our orders and results will be done electronically.”, Dr. James Beebe.

To learn more about the San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department Lab or Dr. James Beebe, visit the website at <http://www.slopublichealth.org/Lab>.



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▲ Powering the Modern Lab