



September 25, 2024

The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shalanda Young  
Director  
White House Office of Management and Budget  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Secretary Becerra and Director Young:

As you work on developing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Presidential Federal Budget Request, the Association for Diagnostics & Laboratory Medicine (ADLM) respectfully requests your attention to two essential healthcare initiatives that will significantly strengthen the foundation of our nation's healthcare system. Our specific requests include a \$10 million allocation to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to enhance Pediatric Reference Intervals (PRIs) and an additional \$7.2 million (making it \$9.2 million in total) for the harmonization of clinical laboratory test results.

The integrity of our healthcare system depends, to a large extent, on the reliability of diagnostic tools and methods. For pediatric care, this means the need for PRIs that are up-to-date, precise, and reflective of the diverse and evolving health needs of our children. Many of the existing PRIs fall short. They frequently miss capturing the full spectrum of biological changes in children as they grow, leading to potential misdiagnoses or misguided treatment protocols. Investing in this area means prioritizing an accurate, evidence-based approach to pediatric healthcare. Better PRIs will lead to more informed diagnoses, ensuring that children across the nation receive care tailored to their specific developmental stage and health needs. (See attached House and Senate appropriations committees report language).

While refining PRIs addresses a targeted need, the harmonization of clinical laboratory test results is a broader, yet equally pressing concern. Differences in test results, depending on the method or instrument employed, can lead to variance in diagnoses. A physician should be able to trust that a test result has the same meaning no matter where or how it is conducted. The harmonization of cholesterol tests is a testament to the potential benefits of such standardization. It not only brought consistency in diagnosing heart disease but led to early interventions, resulting in significant healthcare savings. Dedicating additional resources to this initiative will lay the groundwork for a healthcare system where clinicians across the country can make decisions based on universally accepted and understood metrics, eliminating inconsistencies, and ensuring that every patient, no matter their location or the facility they visit, receives uniform, high-quality care.

The bipartisan support that both these initiatives have garnered attests to their significance. Both Congress and the CDC have acknowledged these programs' need and potential impact. Secure, dedicated funding would catalyze their effective implementation, leading to an immediate and lasting positive impact on our healthcare system.

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ADLM urges you to incorporate these proposed allocations into the FY2026 budget. These initiatives are not just about refining metrics or standardizing processes. At its core, this is about the patients who trust our healthcare system with their well-being and lives. If you have any questions, please email Vince Stine, PhD, ADLM's Senior Director of Government and Global Affairs, at [vstine@myadlm.org](mailto:vstine@myadlm.org).

Sincerely,

Anthony A. Killeen, MD, MSc, PhD  
President, ADLM