

# Press release

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## Veterinary public health: the VPH HUB creates an IDEX-accredited Industrial Education and Research Chair promoting the One Health approach

In a year dominated by an unprecedented global health crisis, the VPH HUB is emphasizing veterinary public health's decisive role in the fight against infectious diseases. A year after it was launched by ten key stakeholders\* in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes's health ecosystem, the VPH (Veterinary Public Health) HUB is presenting its first progress report.

**Founded in January 2020 with the aim of making Lyon a world leader in veterinary public health, the VPH HUB set itself four priorities**

- Promoting the Veterinary Public Health concept and coordinating a community of international experts;
- Creating an IDEX-accredited Industrial Education and Research Chair in Veterinary Public Health;
- Increasing the Greater Lyon area and Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region's attractiveness to innovative companies in the Veterinary Public Health field;
- Promoting apprenticeships and vocational training to meet the challenges facing companies in the sector quickly and effectively.

**An initial milestone was reached in December 2020 with the launch of an IDEX-accredited Industrial Education and Research Chair in Veterinary Public Health**

At the VPH HUB's initiative, Claude Bernard Lyon 1 University and VetAgro Sup recently joined Boehringer Ingelheim, the CNRS and University of Lyon to launch an IDEX-accredited Industrial Education and Research Chair in Veterinary Public Health.

The new Chair, whose holder is the epidemiologist Thibaud Porphyre\*\*, aims to promote veterinary public health through several initiatives:

- Creating interdisciplinary training for a wide range of international audiences;
- Initiating research that addresses the ecoepidemiology and socioeconomic issues affecting animal health action plans;
- Developing decision-making tools aimed at the authorities and manufacturers.

As well as interdisciplinary education, the Chair will include an advanced research unit in evaluative & predictive epidemiology and socioeconomics in animal health.

**The One Health approach, with no boundaries between human, animal and environmental health, central to the VPH HUB's work**

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for multidisciplinary control strategies in the fight against infectious diseases, reflecting not only their cross-species transmission but also their economic and social impacts.

60% of existing human infectious diseases are of animal origin. The VPH HUB focuses on the fight against zoonotic diseases, impactful animal diseases (avian influenza, BSE 'mad cow disease', rabies...) and human-to-human transmitted diseases found in animals or having an animal reservoir, which can cause serious health crises such as Ebola and SARS-CoV-2.

Public health protection must involve the development of global pathogen prevention and control strategies, coordinated at the man-animal-ecosystem interface and applied at international, national and regional levels. The VPH HUB is therefore concentrating on a One Health approach to four priority issues:

- Managing animal epidemics (epizooties) with far-reaching economic effects, such as African swine fever or the avian influenza that is currently raging in France;
- Fight against antibiotic resistance;
- Food health safety;
- Preserving biodiversity.

### A hub with global ambitions

The VPH HUB and Chair aim to contribute to making Lyon a major international research hub in veterinary public health and training for industry stakeholders.

It draws on a particularly dense regional academic and industrial infrastructure in infectiology and vaccinology, and on a regional ecosystem structured around the One Health concept, with monitoring and research networks in animal health.

Regional strengths were highlighted throughout 2020 via participation in events such as BIO or #PartneringAgainstCovid19.

In 2021, the VPH HUB will continue its work in promotion, raising awareness of Veterinary Public Health and creating a community of international experts with a view to hosting a **high-level international conference by 2022**.



**\*Founding partners:** Aderly, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Entreprises, BIOASTER, Boehringer Ingelheim, Institut Mérieux, Lyonbiopôle, Métropole de Lyon, Region Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, University of Lyon and VetAgro Sup.  
**Associate partners:** INRAE, ANSES.

**\*\*Thibaud Porphyre** is a quantitative epidemiologist who graduated from New Zealand's Massey University with a PhD in epidemiology. He recently spent ten years at the University of Edinburgh working with a network of experts within EPIC, the Scottish Government's Centre of Expertise on Animal Disease Outbreaks. He researches risk assessment in animal infectious disease transmission and improved monitoring and control strategies to support the authorities and industry players in their decision-making.

For more information on the VPH HUB:   



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