

Maternal and Child Health

Assignment Description:

All the assignments will be designed to assist the Fellow in obtaining on-the-job training in applied epidemiologic skills at the local Health Department level as stated in the SOW approved by the CDC. The Fellow will receive assignments directly from the primary mentor. The assignments may be communicated in verbal or written format. The primary mentor will work closely with the Fellow to ensure understanding of the requested work, provision of resources needed to complete the assignments and compliance with due dates. The secondary mentor will provide day-to-day guidance to ensure the Fellow will have all the necessary resources to complete the assignments.

In general, the fellow will work on three categories of assignment: 1) supporting REP in conducting its routine surveillance activities, 2) supporting the implementation of the Los Angeles Mommy and Baby (LAMB) project, and 3) working on special project and activities as stated in the SOW approved by CDC/CSTE.

Day-to-Day Activities:

The Fellow is expected to follow County standards and code of conduct, and to work as an epidemiologist of the REP team. The Fellow will perform following activities:

1. Supporting the REP Unit in conducting its routine surveillance activities. These include assist in analyzing birth and death vital statistics data sets, monitoring birth outcomes, responding to internal and external data requests, and compiling health data reports, and work closely with REP staff to develop a MCAH Data Center (25% time).
2. Supporting the implementation of the LAMB, These include participate in the logistics and operations of implementing a large surveillance project. These include attending regular project meeting, designing survey, conducting phone interview, reviewing incoming survey, and performing data management/analysis (25% time)
3. Working on activities and special project as stated in the SOW approved by CDC/CSTE (50% time).

Potential Projects:

The purpose of the Fellowship is for the Fellow to gain in-depth hands-on experiences in MCAH surveillance, exposure and experience in MCAH research and evaluation related issues. The Fellow can choose one or more of the following projects:

A. Los Angeles County Mommy and Baby (LAMB) Survey:

This bi-annual survey studies over 6,000 new mothers who delivered live birth infants. The purpose of this survey is to identify potential factors, such as the lack of preconception/prenatal care, smoking, domestic violence, and others, which result in adverse birth outcomes (low birth weight or pre-term birth). REP is currently conducting a series of multi-level analyses to evaluated independent effects of neighborhood contexts on maternal risky behaviors and risks of adverse obstetric outcomes (LBW or preterm birth, C-section delivery) among mothers participating LAMB (2007 and 2010). The fellow will be encouraged to join this endeavor to assist LACMCAH in identify new strategies in improving birth outcomes. The Fellow can analyze LAMB data, prepare abstracts/manuscript, and discuss findings with community-stakeholders to develop effective strategies in improving birth outcomes.

For more information about the project, please visit:

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/mch/LAMB/LAMB.html>

B. L.A. Heath Overview of a Pregnancy Event (HOPE) Survey:

This annual epidemiological survey studies over 300 new mothers who experienced a fetal or infant loss. The purpose of this study is to identify potential factors related to fetal/infant deaths. The Fellow can help maintain fetal/infant surveillance systems, analyze HOPE data, prepare the abstracts/manuscripts, and discuss findings with community-stakeholders to develop effective strategies in reducing infant/fetal mortality. For more information about the project, please visit: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/mch/LAHOPE/LAHOPE.html>

C. Development and maintenance of the MCAH DATA CENTER:

The purpose of the MCAH Data Center project is to promote access to local MCAH data. The Data Center will provide a comprehensive online database catalog of local MCAH datasets, interactive tools, and other related data resources for public health professionals, researchers, practitioners, policy makers and students. Specific activities for the Fellow include working with REP staff to identify the key components of the MCAH Data Center, developing the design of the Data Center website, finalizing Tracking Preconception Health Project on the Data Center website, publishing health briefs, promoting the data center among key community stakeholders, and developing web-based data query system and dashboard capacity.

D. The Los Angeles County Action Learning Collaborative (LACALC):

To increase capacity at the community level, in 2008, MCAH formed a Los Angeles County Action Learning Collaborative sponsored by CityMatCH, the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs and the National Healthy Start Association to address the impact of racism on birth outcomes and infant health in LAC. This unique opportunity will give our Fellow a chance to learn how to work collaboratively with community stakeholders to translate public health data into effective public health actions. His/her role will include assisting the team to develop an in-depth report describing and assessing racism and infant death in LAC based on a life-course perspective, developing and revising LAMB and LA HOPE tools to further elucidate the association between racism and adverse birth outcomes, identifying existing resources, potential partners, and opportunities for collaboration to further confront racism, and developing a framework for an online learning community to share knowledge and resources for customized training for local communities and target audiences.

E. Perinatal Periods of Risk (PPOR) Project:

In response to the high infant and fetal mortality rates among African Americans, the MCAH has been taking a new approach to improve birth outcomes for African Americans since 2006. This model, PPOR, emphasizes early community engagement to identify problems and develop prevention strategies. The Fellow will work closely with our Black Infant Health (BIH) Program to conduct comprehensive PPOR analysis to assist BIH program in developing a specific project based on the PPOR findings for each of the existing five BIH contractors. The Fellow's duties include: conducting PPOR analysis using available vital statistics data, assisting BIH contractors in implementing their PPOR projects, providing technical support, and attending local community based meetings.

Preparedness Role

The Fellow is expected to follow County, Department, and MCAH Programs guidelines and policies related to emergency preparedness.

The MCAH Programs has an internal Emergency Preparedness Committee aimed at ensuring employee safety during a building emergency. The Committee consists of staff from units and programs within MCAH Programs. The members volunteer their time, and have developed internal guidelines and policies related to emergency preparedness and the MCAH Continuity of Operation (COOP) plan. The

Committee presents regularly at MCAH staff meetings to encourage employee safety and emergency preparedness at the worksite and at home. The Fellow's participation in the Committee is encouraged.

Assignment Location: Los Angeles, California

Primary Mentor: Margaret Chao, PhD
Chief, Research Evaluation and Planning Division, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Programs
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Secondary Mentor: Chandra Higgins, MPH
Epidemiologist
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health