

Environmental Health-Waterborne

Assignment Description:

The Fellow will conduct a project that will expand waters-associated state health department capacity to 1) detect, investigate and report waterborne disease outbreaks and harmful algal bloom events associated with inland and Great Lake beach use; 2) where possible, connect this data to other environmental data; 3) use this data to inform decision making by public health officials and; 4) develop health promotion and educational materials for the general public, public health and medical professionals to expand public knowledge about reducing risks associated with recreational water use. The Fellow will also work with the Waterborne Disease Coordinator in the Bureau of Infectious Disease.

Day-to-Day Activities:

The Fellow will be working with staff in local health districts, Environmental Health, Epidemiology, Injury Prevention and Vital Statistics to collect data on HAB related illnesses and drowning and non-fatal drownings. It is anticipated that the Fellow will also collaborate with the State Fire Marshal's office, the Ohio Coroner's Association and the child fatality review boards in Ohio. Additionally, the Fellow will participate in weekly Epidemiology calls which include staff from the Bureau of Infectious Diseases, Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio Public Health Laboratory, Food Safety Program and the Environmental Epidemiologist.

Potential Projects:

The Fellow will be responsible for creating a procedure to follow-up with physicians of patients that meet the confirmed case definition for illnesses associated with harmful algal bloom toxins. The procedure would include annual follow-up with the patient's primary care physician to determine any potential chronic adverse health impacts from exposure to harmful algal bloom toxins. Additionally, the Fellow will be responsible for creating a comprehensive drowning prevention program. This program will pull together individuals from a variety of areas including the State Fire Marshal's office, Ohio Coroner's Association, local health districts and professional organizations. The Fellow will be required to utilize injury statistics, hospital ER data and vital statistics data to drive outreach and prevention efforts.

Preparedness Role:

The fellow will be invited to participate in trainings, planning meetings (such as the Bioterrorism Committee Meeting), desktop exercises, and other elements of Ohio's emergency preparedness planning. The Division of Prevention has committed to providing additional support and opportunities for the fellow's involvement in emergency preparedness.

Assignment Location:	Columbus, OH
Primary Mentor:	Mary DiOrio, MD, MPH State Epidemiologist Ohio Department of Health
Secondary Mentor:	Mary Clifton, MA Recreation Program Administrator Ohio Department of Health