

Infectious Diseases- Foodborne

Assignment Description:

The fellow would be involved in foodborne disease surveillance, case and outbreak investigations, and special projects in foodborne disease, such as active surveillance projects, surveys, ongoing development of a FoodNet-type population survey for Texas, preparation of articles including data analyses, and information for the DSHS website and external partners.

Day-to-Day Activities:

The fellow would work closely with the currently 5 members of the Foodborne Illness Team. This group is very actively involved in cluster/outbreak investigations, working closely with the DSHS laboratory and regulatory partners, regional and local health department partners, the public including medical providers, and the press office. We anticipate that many of a fellow's daily activities would relate to cluster/outbreak investigations. Other activities, as described above, would also be included.

Potential Projects:

A fellow would have multiple opportunities to assist with investigations of salmonellosis clusters, as well as clusters of other enteric illnesses. A fellow would work closely with the DSHS laboratory and PulseNet to identify clusters for investigation. A fellow could be involved in conducting case-patient interviews for obtaining food histories. In addition, a fellow would be involved with analysis of data from questionnaires, including those for analytic studies. A fellow would compare food frequencies for cluster cases with frequencies in the FoodNet population survey, as well as with the DSHS Texas-specific food survey database that we have been developing. There would be additional opportunities for analysis of historical data, trend studies, surveillance effectiveness, and much more, depending on the specifics of enteric disease detection during the time of the fellowship.

Preparedness Role

Because a fellow would be heavily involved in outbreak investigations, this individual's daily work would related to Emergency Preparedness. We could certainly also involve a fellow in disaster response, such as for a hurricane or wildfire, if deemed appropriate by the CDC/CSTE supervisor.

Assignment Location: Austin, TX

Primary Mentor: Linda Gaul, PhD, MPH, MS
Acting State Epidemiologist; Team Leader of Foodborne Illness Team
Texas Department of State Health Services

Secondary Mentor: Marilyn Felkner, DrPH
Group Manager, Emerging and Acute Infectious Diseases
Texas Department of State Health Services