

Injury/Chronic Diseases

Assignment Description:

This position will be located in the Bureau of Epidemiology's Division of Community Health. This division supports activities for the Bureaus of Health Promotion & Risk Reduction, Family Health, Emergency Medical Services, and Drug and Alcohol Programs. These require data-driven decision-making that enhances the Department's ability to better; a) define the disease burden in the state, b) design interventions, and c) assess outcomes. Analyses are also performed on perceived clusters of specific non-communicable diseases for the purpose of identifying cause and effect relationships and providing direction on intervention strategies. Critical to these functions is the analysis of available morbidity and mortality data. Pennsylvania also has a robust electronic syndromic surveillance that captures real-time reportable diseases. The fellow will also have the opportunity to have interaction with Vaccine-Prevention Diseases, HIV/AIDS, STD, TB, and vital statistics.

The fellow will also work very closely with the Bureau of Health Promotion & Risk Reduction (BHPRR) which is the organizational unit within PADOH that focuses on preventing diseases and injury and promoting wellness among targeted populations. The Bureau has the responsibility to manage the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant along with other state and federally funded programs.

Within the BHPRR is the Division of Health Risk Reduction, which houses the Violence and Injury Prevention Program (VIPP) Section. The purpose of the VIPP is to prevent deaths and disabilities from intentional and unintentional injury by assessing the incidence of injury and developing programs to reduce injury risks. CDC-funded activities include sexual violence prevention and education as well as public health injury prevention and surveillance capacity. The VIPP coordinates the statewide Injury Community Planning Group comprised of over 80 state and local partners to guide capacity efforts. The VIPP priorities are prevention of falls among older adults, motor vehicle crashes among youth, unintentional poisonings by prescription drugs, and violence against children.

Day-to-Day Activities:

The fellow will fully participate in the day-to-day activities conducted by the Community Epidemiology staff. Additionally, the fellow will have the opportunity to attend and present at monthly Journal Clubs and all-day Department Quarterly Epidemiology meetings attended by 50-100 field and state epidemiology staff. The fellow will also be encouraged to attend and present at local, regional, and national conferences.

Potential Projects:

- Surveillance of injuries and determining incidence, prevalence and trends.
- Conducting descriptive studies to identify the distributions of disease and associated risk factors, using existing and novel data sets including the statewide hospitalization discharge database.
- Evaluate survival relative to severity of disease, type of injury, co-morbid conditions, patient characteristics, and care.
- Evaluate the relationship of adverse childhood experiences and injuries, and chronic conditions and injuries.
- Explore new and potential data sources that could benefit injury control efforts.

The CSTE Injury Fellow will also have the opportunity to work with the Safe States Alliance surveillance work group, as well as, the CSTE Injury Workgroup.

Preparedness Role:

Preparedness activities range from investigations of cases and outbreaks of CDC category A, B, and C agents, and preparedness and response for all-hazards - for public health emergencies not limited to bioterrorism and infectious disease outbreaks. Flooding is the most common disaster in Pennsylvania. Preparedness and response for other public health emergencies are within the preview of other offices of the PA DOH and other Pennsylvania state agencies. Numerous opportunities will arise for training provided by partner agencies and stakeholders, including human and animal health agencies, regional preparedness task forces, emergency medical services, emergency management, law enforcement (FBI), U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the National Guard.

The fellow will have the opportunity to work closely with the Office of Public Health Preparedness and the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Planning and preparedness section throughout the course of their fellowship. Opportunities for participation in regional preparedness conferences as well as training exercises and workgroup meetings are frequently available.

Assignment Location: Harrisburg, PA

Primary Mentor: Ronald Tringali, PhD, MS
Epidemiologist
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Secondary Mentor: Laurene Mascola, MD, MPH
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