

Infectious Diseases

Assignment Description:

The fellow will be assigned to the communicable disease control unit and will work on disease surveillance, prevention and control activities under the direct supervision of the Unit Director. The primary areas of assignment will be general communicable diseases and vaccine-preventable diseases. Routine activities will include disease surveillance and outbreak response. Settings in which the fellow is likely to be involved in outbreak investigations include long-term and assisted-living healthcare facilities, and other congregate settings such as schools, daycare centers, restaurants, hotels, and retirement communities.

Day-to-Day Activities:

Routine, daily activities may include one or a combination of the following functions:

- Surveillance for incident cases of notifiable communicable diseases or disease clusters.
- Surveillance for designated cases of newly emerging, rare and/or challenging infectious diseases.
- Communicable disease outbreak investigations including on-site inspection of facilities with suspected or confirmed outbreaks.
- Analysis and report generation of outbreak and surveillance data.
- Quality assurance of local data in the Illinois National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (I-NEDSS) to assure accuracy and completeness of reported cases.
- Monitoring anomalies in CCDPHs syndromic surveillance system (ESSENCE) for detection of potential disease clusters.

Potential Projects:

Due to the increasing frequency of reported clusters of infections caused by drug-resistant bacteria, primarily carbapenem-resistant enterobacteriaceae (CRE), there is a need to evaluate the prevalence of CRE in Cook County long-term care facilities. Under the supervision of the Director, the fellow will be responsible for developing and administering a survey, assessing infection risk and potential transmission routes, developing and implementing intervention strategies, collecting and analyzing data using standard analytic applications, and preparing a report of the project findings.

Preparedness Role:

The fellow will be given the opportunity to participate in the agency's incident command structure and will assist the CD Director in preparation of briefings of disease intelligence for local or regional outbreaks as well as functional drills. The fellow will assist with local and statewide pandemic disease planning and emergency preparedness activities, as necessary.

Assignment Location: Oak Forest, Illinois

Primary Mentor: Michael Vernon, DrPH, MPH
Director, Communicable Disease Control
Cook County Department of Public Health

Secondary Mentor: Demian Christiansen, DSc, MPH
Assistant Director, Communicable Disease Control
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