

## **Injury/ Substance Abuse**

### **Assignment Description**

The fellow will assume the role of a Public Health Researcher (PHR) and will conduct projects that will expand state health department capacity to:

- 1) Understand the circumstances of fatal overdose deaths in Ohio by utilizing the Ohio Violent Death Reporting System to analyze overdose deaths using multiple data sources.
- 2) Improve linkages between vital statistics data and Ohio's prescription drug monitoring program.
- 3) Enhance collaboration with other state data owners through participation on a cabinet level data sharing work group.
- 4) Develop policy and program recommendations based upon the data analysis to reduce unintentional drug overdose deaths and work with stakeholders to disseminate findings.

### **Day-to-Day Activities**

The fellow will be working with staff from state agencies and boards such as the Ohio Department of Health (Injury Prevention and Vital Statistics), Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the State Board of Pharmacy to collect and analyze the relevant data on unintentional drug overdoses. In addition to state partners, the fellow will work with local agencies such as coroners, law enforcement agencies and treatment agencies to abstract data on the circumstances of drug overdose deaths. Additionally, the fellow will participate on regular meetings of the Governor's Opiate Cabinet Action Team's data sharing work group and will attend quarterly meetings of the state injury prevention coalition's Data Action Group and Prescription Drug Abuse Action Group. The fellow will also be provided a Safe States Alliance membership and will be encouraged to network with violence and injury prevention professionals around the country.

The fellow will be able to attend state and local level conferences, such as the Ohio Public Health Association Combined Health Conference and the Generation Rx University Conference for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention & Recovery. A variety of additional training opportunities exist for the fellow through webinars, webcasts, self-directed trainings, etc. The Ohio Department of Health also offers an array of leadership development programs and special lunch and learn events throughout the year.

### **Potential Projects**

The fellow will conduct three potential projects.

- 1) Utilize the Ohio Violent Death Reporting System (OH-VDRS) to analyze the specific circumstances related to unintentional drug overdose to enhance the Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) ability to develop interventions to address this important public health issue. This project will require a random sampling of the 2013 overdose deaths, abstraction of records from local data sources such as county coroner's and law enforcement. Once the data is abstracted it will be analyzed and a final report will be compiled. The fellow will be required to utilize the findings in the report and make policy and programmatic recommendations to drive

outreach and prevention efforts. The fellow will be required to work collaboratively with subject matter experts from Ohio Prescription Drug Abuse Action Group to develop and disseminate the recommendations.

- 2) The fellow will be responsible for updating a report that utilized data from the Ohio State Board of Pharmacy's Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) and Ohio death certificate data to study prescription fill history among Ohio residents who died from drug poisoning in 2008. This report will provide critical data on trends related to doctor shopping and develop a profile of unintentional drug overdose victims in Ohio. The fellow will be required to utilize the findings in the report and make recommendations to drive outreach and prevention efforts.
- 3) The fellow will participate in regular meetings of the Governor's Cabinet Opiate Action Team's (GCOAT) data work group. The purpose of the group is to bring together state data owners to assist the GCOAT in planning and evaluating policies and programs to reduce prescription drug abuse, misuse and overdose. The fellow will be responsible for regularly analyzing ODH vital statistics data and providing regular updates to the group.

#### **Preparedness Role**

The fellow will be invited to participate in trainings, planning meetings, desktop exercises and other elements of Ohio's emergency preparedness planning. In addition, they will be required to participate in the Ohio Public Health Communication System (OPHCS). This system is used by the Ohio Department of Health, Local Health Departments, Hospitals, and other public health partners. The system is used for distribution of health alerts, prevention guidelines, disease investigation efforts and preparedness planning. OPHCS is not available to the general public. The Bureau of Healthy Ohio is located in the same division as the Bureau of Public Health Preparedness and is willing to offer additional support and opportunities for the fellow's involvement in emergency preparedness. Additionally, the fellow will also be provided a Safe States Alliance membership and will be encouraged to network with violence and injury prevention professionals around the country by way of the Disaster Epidemiology special interest group.

**Assignment Location:** Ohio Department of Health  
Columbus, OH

**Primary Mentor:** Mbabazi Kariisa, PhD, MPH  
Injury Prevention Epidemiologist

**Secondary Mentor:** Christy Beeghly, MPH  
Injury Prevention Program Administrator