

Injury

The Alabama Department Injury Prevention Branch (IPB), located in the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease (HPCD), is applying for a Research Fellow to engage in Injury Prevention needs assessment at the state level. Mentors will assure opportunities to develop applied skills and achieve competencies in Injury Prevention Research, in a multidisciplinary bureau that administers a variety of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease programs.

Information about the program:

The mission of HPCD is to protect and promote the health and safety of men, women, infants, children, youth, seniors and their families. Within that context, the IPB Unit has three related goals. The first goal is to provide data-based information on the current trends of injury activities within the aforementioned groups. Achieving this goal entails collecting, analyzing, and reporting information on injury-related behaviors, outcomes, and current marketing activities. The second goal is to meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), State Department of Education (SDE), and Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) reporting requirements. The third goal is to assure that key findings from studies performed are considered by IPB program planners and disseminated to IPB stakeholders.

The IPB Research Unit is responsible for spearheading IPB data collection, assessments, and yielding recommendations on how to reduce injuries within Alabama based off the 2004 Strategic Plan. Additionally, the unit is responsible for preparing and submitting annually required reports and grant applications.

Under the guidance of the primary and secondary mentors, the fellow will have substantial hands-on opportunities to support the injury surveillance activities required by the Strategic Plan. The Fellow will assist in the preparation of monthly injury fact sheets by conducting data analyses and interpreting the data on specific causes of injury morbidity and mortality among Alabama residents. The Fellow will also assist with the development of an improved data dissemination model for injury analyses. The Fellow will also be given the opportunity to present annual updates of injury surveillance. All the aforementioned activities entail extensive interdisciplinary collaboration

Opportunities will be given to the Fellow to participate in special projects of the IPB as they occur. Past examples include:

- investigating potential suicide clusters
- surveillance of unintentional drownings among children

- seat belt usage rates
- lives saved for fire prevention
- rape prevention activities
- falls in the elderly

A major project the fellow will participate in will be to assess the viability of implementing the National Violent Death Reporting System. The Fellow will also be given the opportunity to interact with stakeholders and the public by responding to requests for ad hoc analyses of injury surveillance data and other inquiries. Consistent with the aims of the CDC/CSTE Fellowship Program, in-service training opportunities will be made available to the Fellow.

Program or surveillance system evaluation component:

Opportunities for program and surveillance system evaluation within IPB are abundant. The Alabama Injury Surveillance Data System (AISDS) is a collection of approximately 11 data sources recommended by STIPDA for use in surveillance of injury incidence and risk factors. These data sources include death certificate data, emergency department data, motor vehicle crash data and the Alabama Trauma Registry. Other data sources that will become available for injury surveillance in the near future include the new EMS data system.

Role of fellow in State Emergency Preparedness plan:

The ADPH, the Alabama Hospital Association, and the Alabama Nursing Home Association partner to staff medical transfer center during mass casualty disasters. ADPH's primary role during weather-related disasters is to provide medical need shelters close to the devastated areas. A memorandum of understanding exists between IPB and the ADPH's Office of Emergency Preparedness. All employees and contractors of ADPH, including the Fellow, will be expected to perform other duties as assigned and follow a pre-determined Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

As the opportunity arises, the Fellow may also participate in disaster research teams in the aftermath of such an event.

Assignment Location: Montgomery, Alabama

Primary Mentor: Debra Hodges, PhD
Director, Injury Prevention Research Unit
Alabama Department of Public Health

Advanced Degree: PhD, University of Alabama (2002)

Secondary Mentor: Anita Cowden, DrPH
Director, Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit
Bureau of Family Health Services
Alabama Department of Public Health

Advanced Degrees: DrPH, University of Alabama at Birmingham (1989)
MPH, Tulane University (1976)