

Quarantine

The fellowship position is located in the Quarantine and Border Health Services Branch in Atlanta, Georgia at headquarters. This branch is part of the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, in the National Center for Infectious Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The mission of the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMQ) is to decrease morbidity and mortality from communicable diseases among mobile populations, including immigrants, refugees, migrant workers, and travelers. The DGMQ oversees the medical examination of aliens abroad and in the United States, screens arriving international passengers for illness of public health importance, and coordinates with state and local public health agencies to ensure that immigrants receive needed follow up and treatment. It also provides travelers with essential health information through publications and the Internet, responds to immigration emergencies, and collects worldwide health data. Among the Division's most important current activities are surveillance for diseases such as SARS and avian influenza, and developing plans, procedures, and relationships with state and local health departments to respond to outbreaks of these and similar diseases. The DGMQ is actively involved in preparation for bioterrorism response through collaboration with other public health agencies and the Department of Defense.

The Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMQ) is experiencing a time of strategic growth, opening new Quarantine stations with new staff, and forming permanent partnerships with many agencies responsible for the safety of international travelers and the US public. There is a need for training new staff and for communicating quickly and effectively with staff and partners about various health topics. The fellow will have a major role in planning a strategy and developing focus group guides, interview guides, and survey tools for a training and education needs assessment. In addition, the fellow will have the opportunity to assist with and learn from other on-going education, training, and communication projects in the Quarantine and Border Health Services Branch.

The placement at headquarters provides a unique perspective and many opportunities for the fellow to gain practical experiences in the field at various quarantine stations. In addition, DGMQ is committed to giving the fellow an experience that would address each of the required competencies including participating in outbreak investigations, evaluating a surveillance system and presenting findings in an oral or written format to appropriate audiences. Some possible projects include:

1. Participating as opportunities/needs arise, to assist in the investigation of infectious disease of public health importance involving introduced to the US at international airports, seaports or land crossings working collaboratively with state and local health departments.
2. Assessing the KAB of partners agencies (e.g. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)) in the identification and notification of infectious diseases and preparation for pandemic influenza
3. Assessing the feasibility of conducting surveillance on cruise ships using the existing Vessel Sanitation Program (VSP) surveillance system for gastrointestinal illness

4. Assessing the barriers to pandemic influenza surveillance associated with air travel and maritime travel

5. Assisting in the development of surveillance indicators using the QARS

6. Assessing the spread of influenza virus in an aircraft during travel and transmission to passengers.

Specifically, a surveillance system evaluation component would include:

7. Assessing the sensitivity and specificity of infectious disease surveillance, including identification of barriers in the cruise ship industry.

8. Assessing the utility of specific incidence rate “triggers” for influenza-like illness and severity of illness on cruise ships

The fellow would also be able to assist at the National level in assessment of an emergency preparedness plan through:

9. Assisting in the implementation and pilot testing of the DGMQ pandemic Influenza response team (PIRT) plan components. This will involve critical evaluation and assessment of the identified components of the plan.

Assignment Location: Atlanta, GA

Primary Mentor: Francisco Averhoff, MD, MPH
Supervisory Medical Officer, CDC

Advanced Degrees: MD, University of California, Irvine
MPH, John Hopkins University

Secondary Mentor: Gabrielle Benenson, MPH
Senior Health Education Specialist

Advance Degree: MPH, University of Michigan School of Public Health