

In California, aging and disability are emerging public health issues gaining the attention of researchers and policy makers. The Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control (EPIC) Branch has responded to that interest by creating the Office on Disability and Health to improve the quality of life for people with disability across the lifespan and to prevent secondary conditions. EPIC is the "lead agency" for injury prevention and surveillance in the California Department of Health Services, consisting of more than 30 staff. EPIC collaborates with both internal and external DHS programs, task forces, and projects in access to care for persons with disabilities, osteoporosis, arthritis, senior falls, older drivers, and older pedestrians. Available data on these topics is abundant, but most remains unanalyzed for lack of staff dedicated to emerging public health issues. Tremendous opportunities lie in analysis of existing data. Readily available to EPIC researchers are the following computerized files: excellent hospital abstracts and mortality files, California Health Interview Survey for 2002 (N = 55,000), Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS, N = 4,000 respondents > age 17 years, annual), Woman's Health Survey (N = 4,000 women > age 17 years, annual). Excellent analyses resulting in publications in this area could be accomplished by using available survey data. California has active constituencies who would be pleased to collaborate in producing more analyses from available sources.

Annual opportunities to help develop and refine survey questions exist for the BRFSS, the California Woman's Health Survey, and the California Health Interview Survey. From past questions on injury, injury risks, falls, arthritis, osteoporosis, quality of life, and various indicators of disability, there are many opportunities for analysis of data and publication.

Little is known about risk factors for falls and other injuries and their role on activities and quality of life. The fellow could explore existing data to analyze relationships between data sets to evaluate the quality of survey items now in use. Analytic reports on patterns of senior injuries due to pedestrian and motor vehicle passenger mishaps, as well as barriers to care faced by people with disabilities, would be valuable to EPIC.

The Department's large Emergency Preparedness Office offers training and exercises to ensure preparedness for attack by biological, chemical, and radiological agents. The Primary Mentor is vaccinated for smallpox as part of a BT epidemiologist team. This training, and opportunities for participation, will be available to the fellow

Assignment Location: Sacramento, CA

Primary Mentor: Roger B. Trent, PHD, MA
Chief, Injury Surveillance and Epidemiology Section (1990-present)
Acting Director, Office of Disability Prevention (1997-present)

Advanced Degrees: PhD, University of Washington (1974)
MA, University of Washington (1969)

Secondary Mentor: Alex Kelter, MD
Chief, Epidemiology & Prevention for Injury Control (EPIC) Branch
(December 1989-present)

Advanced Degree: MD, University of Arizona College of Medicine (1973)