

The Delaware Division of Public Health (one of 12 Divisions located within the Department of Health and Social Services or DHSS) is seeking a CSTE Fellow to engage in Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology research at the state level. The fellow will be housed in the Family Health Section within the Center for Excellence in Maternal and Child Health and Epidemiology (Center). The purpose of the Center is to promote, implement, monitor and evaluate Maternal and Child Health initiatives, programs, grants, and research. The Center is composed of a PhD-level advisor, a Master-degreed epidemiologist, a biostatistician, and data entry staff.

The Fellow is expected to seek out federal funding for Maternal and Child Health program support (including Title V), conduct evaluations of existing programs and interventions, implement descriptive and analytic studies using existing state databases, coordinate epidemiologic research utilizing clinic and hospital data, and facilitate linkage of existing state surveillance systems. Projects will be prioritized based on the level of experience of the fellow, and training will be implemented for areas in which the fellow does not hold expertise.

Day to day activities of the fellow include networking with other state agencies, writing grant proposals, conducting statistical analyses, implementing new methodologies to conduct analytic research, and working with the Vital Statistics group to link existing databases. Potential projects include an epidemiologic study of reporting bias in birth and death certificate, and hospital discharge databases, an analytic study of risk factors for infant mortality using hospital data, and detailed statistical analyses of the Pregnancy Risk Assessment and Monitoring System (PRAMS) data. To support such research, the fellow is expected to have a working knowledge of statistics, and an understanding of multivariate analyses. Compiling data for annual grant renewal including Title V is paramount to increasing funding for the state; the fellow will provide expertise in collection of data for Performance and State Measures in the annual application for the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant.

The Center will coordinate with the Health Statistics Branch of the Division of Public Health. The fellow will work closely with HS staff to enable database linkages, and to facilitate linkage with MCH databases such as PRAMS. The fellow will also join the state's Infant Mortality Initiative, Division of Public Health's effort to reduce infant mortality in Delaware. The IMI provides funding and support for the Center, and collaborates with all other agencies within DHSS and independently funded programs throughout the state including Medicaid, Fetal Infant Mortality Review, SmartStart, and Kids Count. The fellow is expected to provide expertise to these agencies in study design, methodology, and analytic approaches.

As mentioned briefly above, the fellow will implement and conduct program and process evaluations. The primary goal of the Center is to effectively evaluate all existing MCH-related programs in the state. The secondary goal is to provide technical assistance to those programs that must conduct evaluation as mandated by granting agencies. The fellow will independently design and execute evaluation plans as needed by funded programs.

The State Emergency Preparedness Plan involves a strategic planning section. The fellow will play a role in the planning section should any major outbreaks in the state occur. However, the primary focus of the fellow is in Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology.

Assignment Location: Dover, DE

Primary Mentor: Herman Ellis, MD
Associate Deputy Director, State Medical Director

Advanced Degrees: MD, Boston University School of Medicine (1978)
MPH, University of Michigan (1975)

Secondary Mentor: Charlan Kroelinger, PhD, MA
State MCH Epidemiologists for DE

Advanced Degrees: PhD, University of South Florida (2004)
MA, University of Alabama (1997)