

Infectious Disease

Assignment Description

Denver Public Health (DPH) promotes, improves, and protects the health of Denver's population through direct clinical care, disease prevention, health promotion activities, and research. DPH services include: Epidemiology and Surveillance, Health Promotion Programs, HIV/STD Prevention and Control, Immunization and Travel Clinic, Infectious Disease/AIDS Services, Emergency Preparedness, Tuberculosis Clinic and Control Program, and Vital Records. DPH is the local health department for the City and County of Denver and is unique in that it is an integral part of a larger quasi-governmental structure known as the Denver Health and Hospital Authority which also includes Denver Health Medical Center (Denver's safety net hospital and level 1 trauma center), Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center, EMS/911 services, and Community Health (8 community family health centers and 12 school-based health centers). More information about Denver Health can be found at www.denverhealth.org. The CSTE Fellow will be assigned primarily in HIV/STD Prevention and Control and will be involved in a broad range of activities that will provide hands-on experience in public health practice. The HIV/STD Prevention and Control area collaborates not only with other areas within DPH and Denver Health, but also with the Tri-County Health Department, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the Colorado School of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and several local community based organizations.

Day-to- Day Activities

Day-to-day activities will vary depending on the primary projects to which the fellow is assigned. After an orientation to the general organization and operation of DPH as a whole and the HIV/STD Prevention and Control area more specifically, the fellow will choose projects that are best suited to his/her interests, experience, and career goals (potential projects are outlined below). The fellow should expect to meet with Dr. Al-Tayyib weekly and jointly with Drs. Al-Tayyib and Davidson monthly. The fellow will also actively participate in monthly meetings including (but not limited to) DPH Program Managers, DPH Leadership, STD/HIV Management, Public Health Statistics Group, STD/HIV Behavioral Research Group, and AIDS Activity meetings. The fellow will have the opportunity to participate in other meetings (within DPH, Denver Health, and collaborating agencies) that may be relevant to current projects or to the fellow's interests.

Potential Projects

National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS): The principal objective of the NHBS system is to monitor risk behaviors and access to prevention services among three populations at highest risk for HIV infection in the United States: men who have sex with men, injection-drug users, and heterosexuals at increased risk for HIV infection. The NHBS strategy involves rotating 12-month cycles of surveillance activities in these three populations. Surveillance activities include ethnographic formative research, in-depth behavioral survey, and HIV testing during each cycle. The Fellow will have the opportunity to serve as the Denver NHBS project manager during at least one cycle and will gain invaluable hands-on experience in project coordination and oversight, in addition to the experience of working with multiple project sites and CDC project officers. The fellow will also be encouraged to lead analyses of local NHBS

data with the opportunity for publications. STD Operational and ad hoc Analyses: The Denver Metro Health Clinic (DMHC) is the largest STD clinic in the Rocky Mountain Region, logging over 12,000 patient visits per year. DMHC provides diagnosis and treatment for Denver County residents as well as many from surrounding counties. Since March 2005, data has been collected via an electronic medical record, HealthDoc, to include demographics, risk factors, diagnostic test results, family planning, and treatment. The wealth of data will allow the Fellow opportunity to explore demographic and behavioral trends, burden of disease, and potential treatment successes and/or failures. Social Network Testing for HIV: In collaboration with the Tri-County Health Department, DPH will conduct HIV testing in the social networks of positive individuals. The Fellow will have the opportunity to evaluate the program and analyze the data using social network analysis techniques. Epidemiology and Surveillance: This unit investigates communicable diseases based on Colorado's mandatory reportable diseases and conducts more extensive analyses on chronic disease trends. The Fellow will be offered opportunity to follow areas of interest in communicable/chronic disease investigations. Potential activities include: 1) case interviews, 2) sample collection, 3) interface with state lab, state and regional health department staff, 4) opportunity to lead an outbreak investigation, and 5) analysis/interpretation and preparation of reports. Tasks may include data entry and learning about data management and tools for monitoring health status. Fellow will also have opportunity to understand the interface with preparedness activities in response to public health event investigations and interventions.

Preparedness Role

The Fellow will be given opportunity to serve as a lead on a quality improvement project in DPH's Emergency Preparedness program. The department has data, but often the data is not easily accessible. The fellow will evaluate current systems, identify improvement, and organize data for added value, which may include database development and data entry in addition to analysis.

Assignment Location:	Denver, Colorado
Primary Mentor:	Alia Al-Tayyib, PhD, MSPH Assistant Research Scientist Denver Public Health
Secondary Mentor:	Arthur Davidson, MD, MSPH Director, Public Health Informatics Denver Public Health