

The Data Evaluation Team (DET), within the Division of Family Health, is responsible for the analysis and evaluation of surveillance and programmatic data related to maternal and child health in Florida. The DET works on issues related to maternal mortality and morbidity, prematurity, infant mortality, SIDS, low birth weight and racial disparities relating to access to health care for reproductive and child health services. The Florida Department of Health (FDOH) works closely with 31 Healthy Start Coalitions and the FDOH vital statistics staff to gather data for purposes of evaluation. In 2003, the DET conducted a 3-day training on vital statistics and other data sets for the Healthy Start Coalitions, and 28 coalitions had one or more staff members trained. The team also worked with the vital statistics staff on the revision of the 2004 birth certificate form for the state and will be involved in the analysis of data from the new form.

Significant emphasis is placed on working with local communities to increase their data capacity. In 2004 the team created three infant mortality technical assistance teams to work with local communities using Florida's official matched file which includes birth certificate data linked to infant and fetal deaths as well as prenatal screening data. There is also the capacity to link this file to prenatal services data from the state Healthy Start program.

The DET is also involved in ongoing reviews of maternal mortality and fetal/infant mortality, with assessment of trends in infant mortality and low birth weight deliveries on a county level for all of the 67 Florida counties. The requested fellow would work with the team on these projects.

The team has routine access to the data collected by interview in PRAMS, a CDC-funded study on pregnancy outcomes. The DET staff has also worked jointly with CDC and the Healthy Start Coalitions from the 7 largest urban counties (Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Tampa, St. Petersburg, Jacksonville, West Palm Beach and Orlando) on Perinatal Periods of Risk (PPOR), an in-depth examination of how adverse maternal and infant outcomes occur.

The successful recruitment of a CSTE fellow would enable the team to expand its efforts to assess the impact of sexually transmitted diseases on reproductive health outcomes, to work with medical examiners to assess how SIDS deaths are evaluated in different districts throughout the state, to assess the impact of smoking on low birth weight in Florida and other projects. In addition, the successful recruitment of an assignee would extend the depth of the DET and permit joint efforts with the Bureau of Epidemiology and other units in the Division of Disease Control at FDOH.

The fellow will have the opportunity to use the CDC report, *Updated Guidelines for Evaluating Public Health Surveillance Systems* (CDC, 2001) to evaluate at least one surveillance system. Potential systems to be evaluated include the newborn screening system for metabolic diseases, or the reporting of communicable diseases of particular importance for maternal child health (such as chlamydia, Group B strep, and neonatal Listeria and E. coli meningitis).

In addition, the fellow will be involved in an assessment of the impact of reproductive technologies such as fertility drugs and in vitro programs on multiple births, low birth weight and prematurity in Florida. The 2004 birth certificate includes such data and an assessment will be conducted with the goal of presenting the results at a national meeting and in a peer-reviewed journal.

Assignment Location: Tallahassee, FL

Primary Mentor: Carol A. Graham, PhD, MS

Florida_ Graham

Associate in Research, Institute for Research Infrastructure (August 1999-present)

Advanced Degrees: PhD, The Florida State University (1996)
MS, The Florida State University (1983)

Secondary Mentor: Dan Thompson, MPH
Associate in Research, Institute for Research Infrastructure
(March 2001-present)

Advanced Degrees: MPH, The University of South Florida (1989)