

Illinois_Conover

The fellow will be assigned to the Division of Infectious Disease, which includes Communicable Disease (CD), Tuberculosis (TB), STD, Immunization, and STD/HIV Sections. Each of these Sections is responsible for state-wide disease surveillance, prevention and control programs, which are conducted in collaboration with 95 local health departments. All Sections except HIV/AIDS are headquartered in Springfield Illinois, the state capitol, located 200 miles from Chicago. In collaboration with IDPH and local public health agencies, the Department of Homeland Security and CDC are engaged in BT related activities that focus on Chicago and St. Louis (including Biosense, a situational awareness/syndrome surveillance system and Biowatch, an environmental monitoring program for BT agents).

Illinois has substantial morbidity due to numerous infectious diseases, including tuberculosis, syphilis, and HIV, and recent fellows have played important roles in investigation of numerous community and hospital outbreaks (e.g. monkeypox, leptospirosis, histoplasmosis, *Phialemonium*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, and West Nile virus). The fellow will be assigned to the IDPH Rapid Response Team, which provides frequent on-site assistance to local health departments, and whose members have expertise in environmental health, food safety, epidemiology, infection control, and data management.

There are opportunities for interaction with clinical infectious disease clinicians, epidemiologists based at the University of Illinois School of Public Health,, and other trainees. Currently, Illinois Department of Health and the Chicago Department of Public Health host 2 EIS Officers, 1 CSTE fellow and 2 CDC Public Health Prevention Fellows. Fellows have ample opportunity to present at IDPH conferences (2 statewide conferences yearly).

Day to day activities

Although operations for the majority of the Division of Infectious Diseases are headquartered in Springfield, the majority of the state's population is centered in and around Chicago, providing numerous opportunities for participation in outbreak investigations and epidemiologic studies. In addition, the major public health laboratory is located in Chicago, which allows for a collaborative relationship with scientists with expertise in molecular epidemiology, virology, bacteriology, and parasitology.

Potential Projects

The fellow will be able to choose from numerous potential projects including 1)Descriptive epidemiology of CA-MRSA infection, and development as indicated of sentinel surveillance for CA-MRSA 2)Evaluation of the impact of recent (2006) implementation of named based HIV reporting 3)Enhancement of influenza surveillance activities, including development of electronic influenza disease reporting and surveillance modules.

Program or surveillance system evaluation: There are numerous options, including but not limited to: Evaluation of surveillance for Listeria, Group B Streptococcal Disease, *E coli* O157, congenital syphilis, and rabies. (Rabies and potential rabies exposures are the most common situation requiring urgent notification, testing, and decision-making, and as such can be used as an indicator of selected BT response capabilities.)

Role in Emergency Preparedness and Response:

The fellow will have numerous opportunities to participate in response planning and training, as well as functioning as a member of the Rapid Response Team during exercise scenarios. The primary and secondary mentors are extensively involved in pandemic and avian influenza preparedness and response activities, and the fellow will actively participate in collaborative planning involving multiple other State agencies, and local health departments. There are numerous Bioterrorism courses and conferences sponsored by IDPH, CDPH, academic medical centers and hospitals. In addition, the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health serves as designated Public Health Preparedness Centers, and this Center focuses on training the public health workforce to response to routine and urgent public health threats, including bioterrorism events.

Assignment location: Chicago, IL

Primary Mentor: Craig S. Conover, MD, MPH
Medical Director, Office of Health Protection

Advanced Degrees: MD, University of Rochester School of Medicine
MPH, Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health

Secondary Mentor: Connie Austin, DVM, PhD, MPH
State Public Health Veterinarian

Advanced Degrees: Ph.D., Epidemiology, University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign
MPH, University of North Carolina,
DVM, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University