

Maternal and Child Health

Assignment Description

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology positions are jointly located in the Division of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention/Bureau of Family Health (BFH) and the Division of Administration and Professional Licensure/Bureau of Statistics (BHS). The relatively small size of the IDPH allows the CSTE fellow many opportunities to participate in intra-bureau and inter-bureau activities that cover a broad spectrum of maternal and child health issues, communicable disease investigation, and environmental health, as well as activities that build public health infrastructure for all Iowans. The fellow may have the opportunity to serve as an adjunct faculty member at one of Iowa's colleges or universities.

Fellow's anticipated day-to-day activities

The fellow's day-to-day activities will focus on selected IDPH priority projects that are of interest to the fellow.

Examples of analytic and surveillance projects:

- Participate in the Iowa Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (I-PRAMS) pilot project, a population-based surveillance project we will carry out in calendar year 2008. Participation would include data collection and data analysis regarding an array of maternal and newborn issues such as women's health behaviors, (tobacco and alcohol use), access to prenatal care, pregnancy intention, and early infant care.
- Assess the data quality of current record systems with regard to such variables as infant gestational age, maternal report of gestational diabetes, and possible under-reporting of fetal deaths.
- Analyze data from the 2005 Iowa Child and Family Household Health Survey. This survey covers a broad array of health and well-being topics as well as family issues such as the effect of drug and alcohol use and gambling on children in the home. Topics for analysis include, but are not limited to Iowa children's health status, issues related to their nutritional status, obesity and physical activity, access to and use of health care, and access to and use of dental care.
- Analyze 2005, 2006, and 2007 data from the Pesticide Poisoning Surveillance database to examine reported pesticide exposures in children aged 14 years and younger. Topics for analysis include the specific pesticides to which children are exposed, locations where children are exposed to pesticides, and the reported health effects in children who have been exposed to pesticides.
- Analyze 1992 through 2007 data from the Adult Blood Lead database to examine elevated blood lead levels in women of child-bearing age. Topics for analysis include the prevalence of elevated blood lead levels in women of child-bearing age, trends over time, and the identification of specific groups that appear to be at high risk for elevated blood lead levels. The analyses would be used to develop a recommendation regarding blood lead testing for women of child-bearing age.

MCH data capacity building project:

- Work with the SSDI coordinator (State Systems Development Initiative) to examine the results of the 2007 MCH Data Capacity Assessment, identify an appropriate issue for capacity building, design a capacity-building plan, implement the plan, and evaluate the effect on MCH data capacity.
- Participate in chronic disease integration efforts within IDPH, including the development of a set of common indicators from existing data sets, evaluating data needs, and accessing the capacity of IDPH to effect programmatic/analytic chronic disease integration activities.

Comprehensive state-wide needs assessment::

- Participate in planning the process for the 2010 Title V Needs Assessment. Components of this project would include developing a timeline for the needs assessment process, convening the steering committee to ensure

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statewide leadership, refining the prioritization process for determination of the state's needs, and researching infrastructure activities and emerging issues in other states.

Program Evaluation

- Based on birth certificate data, compare birth outcomes, access to prenatal care, and other MCH indicators among women who completed the Barriers to Prenatal Care Questionnaire (a convenience sample) to those who did not complete the Barriers Questionnaire.
- Compare and contrast the data collected by the Barriers Questionnaire (a convenience sample) to the data collected by the Iowa Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (a pilot project using a random sample).
- Evaluate the Nutrition & Physical Activity project. This ongoing 4-year intervention/control group project includes ongoing data collection from students in 12 elementary schools across the state, including the assessment of height and weight as well as surveys of teachers, students, and parents concerning nutrition and physical activity. Topics include but are not limited to longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses of child BMI, physical activity patterns, impact of the USDA-funded fruit and vegetables program on childhood nutritional status, and the impact of school-level changes on student behaviors

What Iowa Can Offer

Iowa offers opportunities for collaboration with academic institutions such as the University of Iowa, Iowa State University and Des Moines University and for collaboration with national organizations such as CityMatCH. The fellow would have opportunities to present their work to state and national meetings, and to submit to peer-reviewed journals.

Des Moines, Iowa is a growing city known for its short commute times, affordable housing, and offers some of the nation's best schools. Des Moines is the home of a number of private colleges including Drake University and Des Moines University. The city and the surrounding area have many recreational opportunities for those who love the outdoors, such as miles of biking and hiking trails. Iowa is internationally known for its annual bicycle ride across the state, RAGBRAI. Those interested in the arts will find a number of venues for live music and theater. The city also has a new public library.

The Des Moines International Airport is easily accessible and just 5 miles from downtown. It provides direct flights to Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Las Vegas, New York City, Milwaukee, Orlando, Washington DC, and many other locations in the United States.

If you would like to learn more about Des Moines, Iowa, visit the Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau at www.seedesmoines.com.

Description of Supervision

Primary Mentor:

Debra Kane, PhD
CDC Assignee/MCH Epidemiologist (2005-present)
Advanced Degrees: PhD, University of Illinois @Chicago (2003);
MS, University of Wisconsin @ Madison (1994)

Secondary Mentor:

M Jane Borst, MA
Bureau Chief
Bureau of Family Health (1993-present)
Advanced Degrees: BA, Augustana College (1972);
MA, University of Iowa (1983)