

Maternal and Child Health

The Center for Community Health in the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) is interested in having a CDC/CSTE Fellow participate in a variety of activities in the maternal and child health program area. Current areas of investigation include adolescent health, perinatal health, nutrition, as well as other topics.

Analytical support for a wide range of programs across a number of divisions is provided by epidemiologists and analysts working in the Statistics and Evaluation (S&E) area in the Center for Community Health (CCH). The CCH includes Family and Community Health, Child and Adolescent Health, Nutrition, Perinatal and Early Childhood Health, Substance Abuse Services, Health Promotion, Injury and Violence Prevention, and Tobacco Control. The work performed by S&E staff includes needs assessment, surveillance, data management and analysis, program evaluation, report writing, and health statistics interpretation.

The CDC/CSTE Fellow would work closely with staff members in S&E on ongoing surveillance and program support activities. One current project is the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (MYHS). The survey is to be conducted every two years. Planning is currently underway for the 2007 survey. The Fellow would have an opportunity to be a key member of the team developing the survey, analyzing the data, and developing the survey report. Potential activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Investigate ways to improve coordination between MDPH and the Massachusetts Department of Education in planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting on the MYHS. The Fellow would participate in interagency meetings of the survey planning team, and would implement its recommendations.
- Analyze data from the MYHS and develop and generate a comprehensive report. Collaborate with epidemiologists and program managers working across the Center to ensure the survey results are available throughout the Center, are used consistently, and meet program needs.
- Synthesize data from MYHS and various other internal and external sources of adolescent health data including School Based Health Centers (SBHC), Essential School Health Services (ESHS), Science Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Substance Abuse and the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of adolescent health across the state, to identify racial/ethnic disparities, and to help inform program planning and evaluation.
- Monitor maternal morbidity/mortality and identify factors that contribute to racial disparities, to include women's preconception health, maternal injuries and chronic disease.
- Evaluate parental satisfaction and outcomes related to Children with Special Health Needs programs.
- Analyze variations of fetal and infant mortality by geographic regions using perinatal periods of risk assessment (PPOR).
- Prepare and disseminate infant mortality and teen pregnancy community packets.
- Develop an analytic and evaluation plan for the Center's youth programs.

- Analyze Body Mass Index (BMI) data collected in schools to help fill gaps in the state's nutrition surveillance system among the 5 – 12 years age group. Collaborate with epidemiologists in the Division of Health Promotion in developing reports.
- Develop a plan for obtaining and analyzing health data on youths transitioning out of foster care.
- Develop a plan for utilizing existing data from the SBHC program for quality improvement and performance measurement.

The Fellow will also attend monthly staff meetings with epidemiologists from S&E, and will have an opportunity to learn about other programs at the MDPH. There are also opportunities to conduct cross-cutting research with other bureaus within the Center for Community Health (HIV, Substance Abuse, etc) as well as with other bureaus (Vital statistics, Communicable Disease Control). Boston also offers opportunity for collaboration with academic institutions such as Harvard School of Public Health and Boston University School of Public Health. The Fellow would have an opportunity to present their work to programs within MDPH, in national meetings, and peer reviewed journals.

Assignment Location: Boston, MA

Primary Mentor: Robert Leibowitz, PhD
Epidemiologist, Child and Adolescent Services (Statistics and Evaluation)

Advanced Degrees: PhD, University of California, 1991
MBA, Boston University, 1994

Secondary Mentor: Joshua Nyambose PhD, MALD
Epidemiologist, Nutrition Unit (Statistics and Evaluation) (2002-present)

Advanced Degree: PhD, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, 2001
MALD, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 1995