

The Fellow would have a truly unique opportunity to act as a member of the Infectious Disease Epidemiology team, with a particular emphasis on foodborne and emerging infectious disease opportunities. He/she could choose among activity areas to tailor experiences leading to advanced skills in applied communicable disease epidemiology, as well as some policy and program development. The Fellow would directly participate in investigations of acute outbreaks of foodborne or emerging diseases requiring immediate public health response. Based on complexity and scope of an outbreak, the Fellow could serve either as a coordinator of an investigation or as a team member. End products would include development of hypotheses and hypothesis-testing questionnaires, descriptive and analytic studies of the data, and recommendations for intervention and control strategies. Creating and delivering presentations of investigative methods and findings would also be supported.

Michigan has a robust state health reference laboratory with highly trained staff scientists; interactions with laboratory staff occur on a daily basis. Michigan currently has 45 local health departments throughout the state, from very rural to highly urban settings. Approximately 10 have on-site epidemiologists. There would be diverse opportunities to provide all levels and formats of technical consultations to these agencies regarding outbreaks and other special investigations guidance.

A surveillance system evaluation planned for the Fellow will be to compare laboratory reports vs. case reports at the state level for the following 4 enteric organisms: Salmonella, Shigella, E.coli and Listeria. Because of the reference capabilities and frequent need for molecular analysis of these isolates, these 4 organisms are expected to be forwarded to the state laboratory. There exists an electronic laboratory-reporting database, and there exists an electronic case report database. The case reports database are submitted by local health departments to the state health department after initial reports are completed by physicians.

A major project for the Fellow will be the expansion and conversion to EpiInfo 2002, of a software program that was developed by this office as a resource of point-source outbreak analysis. It has a special emphasis for foodborne outbreaks and currently is based in the DOS-based Epi Info 6. It has been met with great enthusiasm by local health departments in Michigan.

Michigan has established an Office of Public Health Preparedness. It has drawn staff from both the epidemiology and laboratory programs of the health department. As such, the Office maintains close ties with both epidemiology and laboratory programs. The Fellow will have many opportunities to participate in trainings, discussions, and projects with the Office of PH Preparedness in Michigan.

Assignment Location: Lansing, MI

Primary Mentor: Mary Grace Stobierski, DVM, MPH  
Chief, Infectious Disease Epidemiology Section (1999-present)

Advanced Degrees: DVM, Michigan State University (1983)  
MPH, University of Michigan (1989)

Secondary Mentor: Matthew Boulton, MD, MPH  
State Epidemiologist (October 1998-present)

Advanced Degrees: MD, University of Nevada School of Medicine (1987)  
MPH, University of Michigan (1991)