

The CSTE fellow will be assigned to the Immunization, Tuberculosis and International Health (ITIH) Section. This section has primary responsibility for surveillance of vaccine-preventable disease, including influenza and smallpox, and surveillance and case management of tuberculosis. The fellow could assist in day-to-day case investigations of these diseases, outbreak control efforts, program evaluation and planning.

The primary responsibilities of the fellow will focus on surveillance and control of vaccine-preventable diseases. Minnesota has a high incidence of pertussis, which is the subject of ongoing investigations in adults. During the past year, ITIH epidemiologists investigated varicella vaccine efficacy during an outbreak in Northern Minnesota. The Section also has an interest in improving our efforts to reduce morbidity and mortality from influenza in the state. In this position, the fellow would learn the mechanics of running one of the best immunization programs in the country. The fellow is also likely to be involved in the investigation of drug resistant tuberculosis cases or outbreaks of TB in the state. Additionally, the fellow will have the opportunity to participate in the planning for control of a smallpox outbreak and/or phases 2 and 3 of the Minnesota's pre-event smallpox immunization program. The fellow will have the opportunity to work closely with the co-located Public Health Laboratory, which has been at the cutting edge in the use of pulse-field gel electrophoresis and molecular biologic techniques in the detection and control of infectious diseases.

Examples of projects that could be conducted by the fellow include: a case-control study of immunization rates of staff in nursing homes with influenza outbreaks, examining the effectiveness of placing immunization registry terminals in country jails and HIV testing sites in promoting hepatitis B immunization for high risk youth, and/or a case control study of mycobacterium avium intracellulare related to hot tub exposure. In collaboration with other sections, the fellow could study vaccine efficacy for the equine West Nile Virus vaccine, effectiveness of Health Department recommendations on the use of irradiated beef in medical institutions or the use of genetic fingerprinting in studying the epidemiology of gonorrhea infections.

The fellow will be expected to evaluate a surveillance system during the assignment. Due to the recent rise in late reported multi-drug resistant TB cases, evaluating TB surveillance would be an appropriate project. Further, our high level of pertussis in adults warrants a formal evaluation of the pertussis surveillance system in Minnesota. A third possibility would be to evaluate the varicella surveillance system.

Assignment Location: Minneapolis, MN

Primary Mentor: Harry F. Hull, MD
State Epidemiologist and Director, Infectious Disease Epidemiology
Prevention and Control Division (2000-present)

Advanced Degree: MD, Johns Hopkins University (1973)

Secondary Mentor: Kristen Rosdahl Ehresmann, RN, MPH
Section Chief, Immunization, Tuberculosis, and International Health
Section (2000-present)

Advanced Degree: MPH, University of Minnesota School of Public Health (1990)