

New Mexico_ Gallaher

This Fellowship will provide the Fellow with experience in developing, evaluating and using occupational surveillance systems. Although one specific project is the development of occupational injury surveillance, there are a wide variety of other projects available according to the Fellow's interest. These include projects in environmental health and injury epidemiology such as environmental risk assessment, linking environmental monitoring and health event data, asthma prevention, waterborne disease surveillance, firearm injury surveillance and motor vehicle crash data. All areas include ample opportunity for original data analysis, publication and policy development.

Information about the program

The Epidemiology and Response Division has over 160 staff members and conducts epidemiologic investigations in infectious diseases (including HIV/AIDS), injury, environmental and occupational health, substance abuse and other behavioral health issues. A full time survey unit conducts the BRFSS and other surveys. The Division also encompasses Vital Records and Health Statistics, and the Office of Health Emergency Management which includes Emergency Preparedness funding from CDC and HRSA and Emergency Medical Services. This Fellowship would be supervised by the Assistant State Epidemiologist.

Occupational Health activities:

New Mexico received a Capacity-building grant from NIOSH in 2002 to begin developing surveillance for occupational injuries and illnesses. The activities are coordinated by the Environmental Health Epidemiology Bureau and conducted largely at the Program for Occupational and Environmental Health at the University Of New Mexico School Of Medicine.

Injury Epidemiology activities:

The Injury and Behavioral Epidemiology Bureau is housed in the Epidemiology and Response Division, and includes the Survey Unit. The Bureau currently has 35 FTE staff and conducts data collection and analysis and provides leadership in the following areas: Analysis of injury deaths, Non-fatal injury data collection using the Hospital Inpatient Discharge Data, Occupant Protection Survey, analysis of motor vehicle crash data, Injury Prevention, Analysis of deaths due to substance abuse.

Environmental Health:

The Environmental Health Epidemiology Bureau currently has 13 full time staff, including 6 epidemiologists, 3 health educators and a database specialist. The Bureau has seven federal and state funded projects including EH capacity building, EH Tracking, Asthma, lead poisoning, and waterborne disease surveillance.

Anticipated day-to-day activities:

- Actively participate and collaborate in workgroup to design and begin implementation of an emergency department data collection system for occupational injuries.

- Analyze existing data on occupational injuries from a variety of sources, including Vital Records data, Worker's Compensation data, Occupational Health and Safety data and Hospital Inpatient Discharge Data. This would create a descriptive analysis including industry, occupation, injury types, geographic distribution and demographic characteristics.

- Investigate selected occupational injury categories or events to determine prevention opportunities

- Investigate reports of concern about occupational exposures resulting in health concerns

- Design injury components of the NM Occupational Health Registry.

- Participate in interdisciplinary planning and analysis of environmental, occupational or injury investigations and/or analysis.

Examples of potential projects:

- Develop and implement Emergency Department surveillance

- Identify target areas for further investigation (likely areas include oil and gas operations, mining, convenience store operators and others with increased risk of on-the-job violence, health care providers, prison guards and agricultural workers

- determining the relationship of occupational injuries to non-occupational injuries

- assessing the impact of social and economic factors on occupational injuries

Program or surveillance system evaluation component:

Based on analysis of surveillance components identified in the descriptive analysis, the Fellow will prepare an evaluation of the overall surveillance system for occupational injuries.

Role of fellow in State Emergency Preparedness plan:

Develop sections of the New Mexico Emergency Operations Plan relating to protecting health and safety of emergency responders and health care workers during emergency response.

Assignment Location: Santa Fe, NM

Primary Mentor: Margaret M. Gallaher MD, MPH
Assistant State Epidemiologist

Advanced Degrees: MPH, University of Washington (2000)
MD University of Maryland, College Park (1978)

Secondary Mentor: Barbara Chatterjee, MS
Program Manager, Injury Epidemiology Unit

Advanced Degrees: MS, CWRU (1979)