

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is located in Santa Fe, New Mexico. It is a high desert community, sitting at an elevation of 7,000 ft. at the base of Sangre de Cristo Mountains. New Mexico has a population of about 1,800,000.

The Family Health Bureau in the New Mexico Department of Health houses the Title V MCH program for the state, including the Children with Special Health Care Needs Program, Title X Family Planning Program, the WIC Program, FamiliesFIRST (a perinatal case management program), Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program and the MCH Epidemiology Program. The CSTE fellow would have an opportunity to work with any or all of these programs.

On a nearly daily basis, the MCH programs are asked by the governor's office, department leadership, legislators and the public to provide data, information and guidance on a variety of issues such as distribution of flu vaccine in the state, teen pregnancy data and prevention efforts, concerns about a potential cluster of birth defects and how home visiting might be expected to impact the health of children and families in the state. Staff from the bureau regularly meet with and collaborate with partners and stakeholders from around the state to address issues of mutual interest. During the period leading up to and during the legislative session each year in the state, there is much work to be done to analyze proposed legislation and provide information to state legislators. The fellow would be expected to work with staff to respond to these requests as they relate to the work that the fellow is pursuing.

Potential projects for a CSTE fellow include:

- **Investigation of an increase in cases of gastroschisis in the state in collaboration with the Navajo Nation and the state of Arizona**
- **Analysis of the survey of children with special health care needs to examine issues for adolescents as they transition to adulthood or other topic of interest to the fellow**
- **Analysis of a multi-year file of linked birth-death files to examine childhood mortality**

The Family Health Bureau is willing to explore other topics of interest to fellows.

Evaluation of programs and surveillance systems is of on-going interest to the Family Health Bureau. Potential projects could include:

- **Evaluation of the impact on resources of expanded newborn genetic screening. Our newborn genetic screening program is expanding from testing for 6 conditions to testing for over 30 conditions beginning January 2007.**
- **Evaluation of birth defects and children's chronic conditions surveillance system. New Mexico has had birth defects surveillance since 1995. The Environmental Public Health Tracking program wants to collaborate with staff conducting the birth defects surveillance to begin to examine the association between environmental exposures and birth defects in the state. We have been working to improve the birth defects surveillance system, and want to include children's chronic health conditions that are of public health significance. Both surveillance systems will benefit from an evaluation.**

The Children with Special Health Care Needs Program is just beginning to address the emergency preparedness issues for this population. The nutritional programs (WIC, Commodity Supplemental Food Program and WIC Farmer's Market) are also interested in understanding the impact on their populations in the event of an emergency. The fellow would be welcome to participate in the statewide planning efforts that are occurring around families and children, including children with special health care needs.

Assignment Location: Santa Fe, New Mexico

Primary Mentor: Maggi Gallagher, MD, MPH
Medical Director, Public Health Division

Advanced Degrees: MD, University of Maryland (1983)
MPH, University of Washington (2000)

Secondary Mentor: Mary D. Overpeck, DrPH,
Program Manager, MCH Epidemiology

Advanced Degrees: DrPH, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1992)
MPH, University of California at Los Angeles (1967)