

The General Communicable Disease Control Branch is responsible for the surveillance, disease investigation, and control measures for the non-HIV/STD communicable diseases. Within the Branch there is a surveillance and epidemiology unit, a food borne unit, and a tuberculosis unit. Existing staff include 5 physician epidemiologists, a public health veterinarian, a NEDSS coordinator, 2 public health nurses, and clerical and administrative support personnel. The Fellow's anticipated day-to-day activities will be to participate in the communicable disease call schedule, assist in outbreak investigations including Public Health Command Center operations, and to be assigned to special projects. Some potential projects include syndromic surveillance in hospitals, enhanced influenza surveillance, arbovirus disease surveillance and control, food chain safety and security, and NEDSS development for North Carolina. Each of these projects offers opportunities to work with interdisciplinary teams including the Departments of Agriculture and Environmental and Natural Resources, UNC School of Public Health, NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine, the State Laboratory for Public Health, public health regional surveillance teams, and local health departments.

Within the General Communicable Disease Control Branch, the Fellow will have the opportunity to evaluate ongoing surveillance systems. The communicable disease passive surveillance system contains a data set with over 60 reportable diseases and conditions and goes back many years. Diseases of particular interest include the emerging infectious diseases such as arbovirus infections, antimicrobial resistant bacterial infections, and the severe acute respiratory syndrome. Under Dr. Maillard, the Branch has begun a program of syndromic surveillance within hospitals in North Carolina. Several data sets are being simultaneously evaluated and are in the research and development phase. The Fellow will have the opportunity to evaluate this project as well. Finally, NC is transitioning from an NETSS-based to an NEDSS-based statewide surveillance and reporting system for communicable diseases. Working with the NEDSS coordinator and information technology staff, a Fellow with an interest in informatics and public health may choose this project.

The Fellow will be able to participate in training exercises offered by the Office of Public Preparedness and Response headed by Dr. Jim Kirkpatrick. This will include tabletop exercises, field exercises including a mock deployment of the Strategic National Stockpile scheduled for Autumn 2003, as well as ongoing training exercises with our law enforcement partners in forensic epidemiology. The seven Public Health Regional Surveillance Teams are also available to augment training at a more local level. Finally the Fellow will assist in activation and operation of the State Public Health Command Center in the event of a public health emergency that demands surge capacity. The Command Center was activated recently by the General Communicable Disease Control Branch during the SARS crisis of Spring/Summer 2003.

Assignment Location: Raleigh, NC

Primary Mentor: Jeffrey Engel, MD
Branch Head, General Communicable Disease Control/State
Epidemiologist (2002-present)

Advanced Degree: MD, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine (1981)

Secondary Mentor: Jean-Marie Maillard, MD, MSc
Head, Epidemiology and Surveillance (November 2002-present)

Advanced Degrees: MD, Paris, France (1983)

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MSc, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (1991)