

Maternal and Child Health

The Division of Family Health consists of four major bureaus. The Division includes maternal and child health, school health, adolescent health, family planning, dental health, WIC food supplemental program, child care food program, chronic disease prevention, domestic violence prevention, and health promotion. Our MCH Practice and Analysis Unit is a part of the Division's Bureau of Family and Community Health and works within the Bureau and across the Division and Department. The purpose of the MCH Practice and Analysis Unit (MCHPA) is to strengthen the Department's ability to effectively use scientific evidence in its planning and decision-making related to MCH policies and programs. Created in 2006 with the hiring of the State MCH Epidemiologist, the Unit focuses on surveillance, evaluation, epidemiology and evidence-based planning including training the public health workforce. Surveillance activities include monitoring maternal and infant mortality/morbidity, prematurity and cesarean delivery, maternal and child obesity, assisted reproductive technology, and racial disparity. Policy and program evaluation activities include evaluating Florida Healthy Start pregnancy and infant health services, family planning and preconception health.

The CSTE fellow will be actively engaged in planned projects and activities with the MCHPA Team and other FDOH and university partners on a daily basis. With input, MCHPA continuously develops a list of potential MCH epidemiology and surveillance projects of policy/program relevance for staff, fellows and students to work on. The fellow can consider these proposals and new ones. The fellow will develop a work plan designed to meet the fellowship requirements, fellow's interests and program needs in consultation with the CSTE mentors and the Division Director. The intent is to provide a well-rounded solid MCH epidemiologist experience and a successful track record of producing future MCH epidemiologist leaders.

Day-to-Day Activities:

As a dedicated analytic unit, this unit has few administrative/program responsibilities. Based on past experiences of fellow, the day-to-day activities are oriented towards the projects and interests of the fellow. Exposures are readily available to acute outbreaks and preparedness experiences, but are not essential. Almost all work leads to exciting policy/program relevant work that can be published in some fashion.

Potential Projects:

Potential Analytic Projects:

- Study Florida's health disparities in pregnancy-related morbidity: Using a new birth certificate file linked to maternal hospital discharges, explore racial and other health disparities in maternal morbidities especially those conditions that contribute to pregnancy-related mortality, near misses, and other preventable conditions. Florida's nationally recognized Pregnancy Associate Mortality Review Team, a multi-disciplinary academic and practice team would like to use this information to better inform obstetrical practitioners and improve maternal health.

- Study leading child health issues with Florida's new BRFSS-based Child Health Survey: FDOH has recently implemented a new population-based child health survey based on follow up interviews of BRFSS participant households that have children. This new surveillance system gives Florida it first look at many key child health issues that have not yet be study. The fellow can play a lead role in studying multiple child health issues, including generational issues as the child survey is linked to the BRFSS survey.

Potential Evaluation Projects:

- Study the effectiveness of the statewide family planning program on contraceptive use: Based on BRFSS (2002-2004), women of childbearing age in Florida have one of the lowest percentages of contraceptive use among U.S. states. The fellow would have the opportunity to lead an evaluation of the family planning program to identify ways to improve contraceptive use.

Potential Surveillance Projects:

- Implement a new preconception health indicator surveillance system: Florida led a 7-state/CDC effort to develop of core State preconception health indicators to assess and monitor preconception health. By moving from concept to measurement, efforts can be better addressed by a new Florida Preconception Health Council. The fellow will potentially lead the assessment, implementation and utilization of these new surveillance indicators in Florida with a focus towards following a life course perspective.

Emergency Preparedness Role:

Because of multiple hurricanes, pan flu concerns, and other potential hazards, the FDOH persistently focuses on preparedness. The fellow will be able to receive training, to volunteer with hurricane preparation and response, to participate in preparedness planning, and more. Florida experiences several outbreaks each month, providing the fellow with a variety of opportunities for participating outbreaks, based on their interest over the two year fellowship.

Assignment Location:	Tallahassee, Florida
Primary Mentor:	Bill Sappenfield, MD, MPH State MCH Epidemiologist Florida Department of Health
Secondary Mentor:	Cheryl Clark, DrPH, RHIA Training & Research Consultant Florida Department of Health