

The Fellow will be placed with the Community Preparedness Section. Both mentors are also in this section. The Fellow will have an opportunity to choose from a wide range of community preparedness activities, including the possibility of a bi-national experience through either a project or participation in a conference. The Community Preparedness Section is a group of highly skilled and experienced epidemiologists (infectious, environmental, injury, chronic), public health planners, medical professionals, IT specialists, and support staff who serve as the coordinating center for community preparedness activities for the Department. There is frequent interaction with the Department's regional staff and local health departments on a range of issues as diverse as Texas. These may include a human rabies investigation, a rapid epidemiologic response to a natural disaster, smallpox planning, syndromic surveillance, developing plans for the prophylaxis of a major city within 48 hours of a bioterrorism event, emerging infectious disease surveillance along the Texas-Mexico border, and many others. The focus of the Fellow's experience will be community preparedness, but they will have the opportunity to work in other areas of the Department as their interest guides and time allows.

We were awarded approximately \$64 million CDC to upgrade, as needed, state and local public health jurisdictions' preparedness for response to bioterrorism, other outbreaks of infectious disease, and other public health threats and emergencies including chemical, radiological, and agricultural terrorism and natural disasters. The Fellow will be asked to initially work with each of the Focus Areas of the grant (see below) to gain an overall understanding of community preparedness at the state and local level. The seven focus areas are: (A) Preparedness Planning and Readiness Assessment including the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Program; (B) Surveillance and Epidemiology Capacity including the Public Health Preparedness Border activities; (C) Laboratory Capacity – Biologic Agents; (D) Laboratory Capacity – Chemical Agents; (E) Health Alert Network/Communications and Information Technology; (F) Risk Communication and Health Information Dissemination; and (G) Education and Training. The main focus of the Fellow's will be to work with chemical, radiological, and agro terrorism issues and to assist with the development of state response plans. The Department's Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) Team resides within the Section and the Fellow will be encouraged to participate with the RNA Team.

In addition to the mentors listed on the application, the Fellow will be encouraged to work directly with our State Epidemiologist (Alex Hathaway, MD), our Assistant State Epidemiologist (Julie Rawlings, MPH), and other experts throughout the Department. Dr. Hathaway is the Director for the Division of Prevention and Preparedness Services. The Disease Prevention & Intervention Section is also under Dr. Hathaway and administers communicable and chronic disease programs; manages the Vaccines for Children program; designs, implements, and operates the statewide immunization registry; and coordinates pharmacy services for public health programs.

Examples of potential projects in which the Fellow may play an active role include infectious disease outbreak investigations working jointly with the Infectious Disease Section and our Regional/Local Health Departments, evaluating regional reporting systems, participating in a Rapid Needs Assessment following a natural disaster, and working with our mental health team develop a plan to integrate a mental health component to our state all hazards emergency response plan.

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Assignment Location: Austin, TX

Primary Supervisor: Judy Henry, PhD
Senior Epidemiologist, Community Preparedness Section, Texas
Department of State Health Services (2004-present)

Advanced Degrees: PhD, University of Texas School of Public Health (2005)
MS, University of Texas School of Public Health (1982)

Secondary Supervisor: Bobby Jones, DVM, MPH
Manager, Division of Epidemiology and Health Information for the
Tarrant County Public Health Department (1995-present)

Advanced Degrees: DVM, Kansas State University (1961)
MPH, University of Minnesota (1971)