

The Fellow will work in the newly formed Division of Zoonotic and Environmental Epidemiology (DZEE) in the Office of Epidemiology (Office), Virginia Department of Health (VDH). The major programs in DZEE at this time are rabies, vector borne disease surveillance and recreational water quality. There are plans to expand to other environmental epidemiology issues, including terrorism preparedness, and partnering with the PhD environmental epidemiologist at Virginia Commonwealth University on environmental tracking projects.

Day to day activities would include participating in the collection, quality control and analysis of data from all programs in DZEE with major responsibility for one or more, responding to questions from the public and local health departments, creating public and medical information documents, and serving on intra and interagency committees. Potential projects include: utilizing bird, mosquito, sentinel chicken, horse and human West Nile virus data to look for predictors and correlations; establishing a surveillance system for side effects to pesticide exposure in areas where mosquito adulticides are used; descriptive epidemiology of human arbovirus cases or human exposures to rabies vectors; investigations of waterborne disease outbreaks and coordination of active disease surveillance around harmful algal blooms and areas of recreational water quality impairment; or investigation of increased Lyme disease reports in northern Virginia. There would also be opportunities to participate in disease surveillance and outbreak investigation activities in the Division of Surveillance and Investigation (DSI) and work on terrorism preparedness projects for both biological and chemical agents.

Additionally, we would like the fellow to evaluate our surveillance for water borne diseases/conditions. Some waterborne diseases may come to our attention through routine surveillance for reportable diseases and outbreak investigations. We also have a hot line for reporting of Possible Estuarine Associated Syndrome (Pfiesteria-related illness) and recently have seen increased attention to atypical *Mycobacteria* associated with Virginia marine waters. There have also been increased reports of *Vibrio* infections. A complete evaluation of all methods of identification and reporting of these diseases and conditions would help us identify gaps and redundancies and design a more effective system for waterborne disease surveillance.

VDH has an active Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) program. They sponsor in person and on line training and provide information about other training that is available through state, federal and private organizations. The role of the Office of Epidemiology in bioterrorism preparedness is in disease surveillance and response to outbreaks. The fellow will be expected to participate in the weekly Division of Surveillance and Investigation (DSI) meetings, the monthly conference calls with the District and Regional Epidemiologists, and periodic combined state wide EPR and epidemiology meetings, all of which have a training component. The fellow will have the opportunity to participate in basic incident command training, visit the state Emergency Operations Center, and attend other in state training for emergency preparedness.

In an outbreak situation, whether natural or man made, staff in both DZEE and DSI, and other Divisions as needed, will be utilized, thus the fellow would be considered part of the epidemiology response team for investigating and providing prevention and control advice. If the fellow has an interest in chemicals and toxins, that role could be developed to help augment our strong expertise in communicable diseases.

Assignment Location: Richmond, VA

Primary Mentor: Suzanne R. Jenkins, VMD, MPH
Assistant State Epidemiologist and Public Health Veterinarian (1996-present)

Advanced Degrees: VMD, University of Pennsylvania (1966)
MPH, Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health (1980)

Secondary Mentor: John S. Marr, MD, MPH, FACP
Director, Office of Epidemiology (2002-present)

Advanced Degrees: MD, New York Medical College (1967)
MPH, Harvard School of Public Health (1972)