

Maternal and Child Health

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) proposes placing a CSTE Fellow with the Maternal and Child Health Assessment Section (MCHAS). This section is located within the Office of Maternal and Child Health and provides epidemiologic and assessment services to programs in state and local health, external health-related organizations and agencies, and the public. MCHAS has approximately 14 staff who focus on issues related to maternal and child health. Analytic staff currently includes 5 epidemiologists, 2 research investigators, and a CSTE fellow. MCHAS conducts or coordinates several surveillance activities, including the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), the Birth Defects Surveillance System (BDSS), and the Healthy Youth Survey (a bi-annual survey of students in 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grades).

The MCHAS section works closely with the program sections within the Office of Maternal and Child Health (OMCH) including Maternal and Infant Health, Child and Adolescent Health, Children with Special Health Care Needs, Immunizations/Child Profile (immunization registry) and Genetic Services. OMCH has a number of initiatives that cross program lines. It has strong collaborative relationships with other programs in the Department of Health and with other agencies around the state. OMCH is committed to using data in the development of programs and policy recommendations

The placement offers an opportunity for the Fellow to become immersed in issues related to MCH epidemiology on a day-to-day basis. The fellow will participate fully in Assessment activities, including weekly staff meetings, MCH brown bag seminars, trainings, advisory committees, and workgroups. The fellow will also be actively engaged in project planning, providing analytic and epidemiologic support to programs within DOH, developing research projects, and conducting program evaluations. The Fellow will also have the opportunity to attend state and regional conferences making presentations to both professional and lay audiences.

Potential surveillance and evaluation projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Evaluation of the Healthy Youth Survey or the Washington State Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS). These systems offer opportunities for hands on experience in collecting, managing, analyzing and interpreting data and for using surveillance data for program evaluation.
- Evaluation of the National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs and/or the National Survey of Children's Health.
- Conduct a bias analysis for the 2008 Healthy Youth Survey to evaluate school participation, student response, and completion rates.
- Conduct a bias analysis of PRAMS to help understand factors associated with decreasing response rates.
- Design a surveillance system for OB access.
- Evaluate the Maternal Mortality Surveillance system and work to revise the system to include maternal morbidity.

Potential analytic projects may include:

- Conduct a study to evaluate American Indian women's health status and infant outcomes using PRAMS, BRFSS, and vital records.
- Analyze data from the Early Hearing-Loss Detection, Diagnosis, and Intervention (EHDDI) parent survey. This survey evaluates the differences in evaluation and referral experiences for children who fail their hearing screen, and may provide the opportunity for manuscript publication.
- Assist in designing and implementing analyses of the immunization registry to estimate vaccination coverage rates.
- Evaluation of the factors associated with smoking cessation and relapse using PRAMS data.
- Assess factors related to maternal and infant morbidity through multivariate analysis of PRAMS, birth, death or hospitalization data, or through linked data sets, such as those in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, Child Death Review, or census data.

Other project may include:

- Research and develop a proposal for the implementation of child health surveillance system.
- Evaluate the new 2003 revised birth certificate to understand the impact of the changes.

Additionally, the MCHAS collaborates with other epidemiology units in DOH including the Communicable Disease-Epidemiology (CD-Epi) and Office of Non-Infectious Conditions Epidemiology (NICE). These offices are responsible for infectious and non-infections epidemiologic responses, respectively. These offices will collaborate in providing mentoring for clusters or outbreaks involving MCH issues and populations.

There are opportunities for involvement in emergency preparedness. As part of the department's Emergency Preparedness Planning, each division has designated emergency preparedness coordinators. The coordinators work with all staff in their respective divisions to provide training and opportunities to volunteer for specialized response efforts. Additional projects may include work to extend emergency preparedness plans to specialized populations such as pregnant women, infants, and children with special needs.

Assignment Location: Olympia, WA

Primary Supervisor:	Cathy Wasserman, PhD, MPH Epidemiologist III Washington State Department of Health
Advanced Degrees:	PhD, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley (1996) MPH, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley (1990)
Secondary Supervisor:	Riley Peters PhD, MS Director of the Office of Maternal and Child Health Washington State Department of Health
Advanced Degrees:	PhD, University of Washington (1998)

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MPA, University of Southern California (1977)