

Infectious Disease

Assignment Description:

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health Division of Disease Control is responsible for the monitoring, control, and prevention of notifiable communicable diseases in the City of Philadelphia. The Division houses a number of program areas that address different aspects of this overall responsibility. The CSTE Fellow will work primarily from within the Epidemiology Unit. This will allow the Fellow to be exposed to all of the program areas within the Division since there are epidemiologists assigned to support each area. The Fellow will also spend dedicated time within the Acute Communicable Disease Program in order to participate in outbreak investigations.

Day to Day Activities:

Initially, the Fellow will rotate with the program assigned master's epidemiologists to learn about each of the program areas within the Division (a week in each program). Afterward, the Fellow will rotate in the Acute Communicable Disease Program for one month to learn about procedures in this program (fielding telephone calls, writing guidelines, processing cases, etc.). During this time, the Fellow will meet with the DDC supervisors to discuss potential analytic projects. After the ACD rotation, the Fellow will be added to the monthly work-hours ACD phone schedule and will sit in ACD when on duty. When outbreaks arise the Fellow will participate in the investigation under the supervision of Dr. Patel. Also following the ACD Program rotation, the Fellow will start on the analytic project under the guidance of Dr. Newbern and the epidemiologist supporting the chosen program area. The Fellow will be expected to attend regular meetings for the different program areas, journal clubs, and any methods trainings offered within the Division.

Potential Projects:

PROGRAMMATIC & SURVEILLANCE:

- Evaluate congenital syphilis reporting
- Compare electronic billing and laboratory reporting of notifiable diseases in City Health Centers
- Evaluate the impact of provider and patient outreach for under-immunized children on vaccination rates
- Determine how many/which providers and children were added to the immunization registry through the novel H1N1 vaccination campaign

RESEARCH INVESTIGATIONS:

- Determine protective factors associated with serially negative test results among students in high school STD screening programs
- Examine new vaccine uptake patterns (HPV, rotavirus)
- Analyze the spatial distribution genetically identical tuberculosis strains
- Assess environmental health inspection findings of swimming pools and their association with recreational water quality indicators
- Identify individual and community level factors associated with heat deaths.

Emergency Preparedness Role:

The Fellow will participate in exercises developed by the Public Health Preparedness Program. The Fellow will help to develop data collection tools for any exercises and will help conduct analysis on collected data.

Assignment Location: Philadelphia, PA

Primary Mentor: Claire Newbern, PhD, MPH
Epidemiology Unit – Program Manager
Philadelphia Department of Public Health

Secondary Mentor: Ami Patel, PhD, MPH
Acute Communicable Disease Program – Program Manager / CEFO
(CDC)
Philadelphia Department of Public Health