

Fellowship opportunities at the Baltimore City Health Department:
Finding a public health mentor

Welcome to the Baltimore City Health Department. Our mission is to advocate, lead, and provide services of the highest quality in order to promote and protect the health of the residents of Baltimore.

We receive many requests from area students and residents to spend time at the Health Department learning more about our scope of services, observing our programs, and contributing to our scholarship in epidemiology, policy, and program design, implementation and evaluation.

Our fellowship mission is to train individuals to advocate and lead in health policy and provide public health services of the highest quality to promote and protect the health of the residents of Baltimore. The fellowship is designed to accommodate all levels of scholarship, from senior undergraduates through physicians. All fellows are encouraged to select a defined project that can be accomplished during their rotation; often, this is a piece of a larger initiative.

Learning Objectives¹

General

- Become familiar with the major causes of mortality and morbidity in Baltimore and Maryland, and prevention/public health strategies to address them at the Baltimore City Health Department
- Gain a basic understanding of local public health law, including the limitations and powers it conveys on the Commissioner and the Health Department
- Identify ethical, social and cultural issues relating to policies, risks, research and interventions in preventive medicine and public health, focusing on their impact on vulnerable populations
- Identify the processes by which priorities are selected and decisions are made on the city, state and national level and their points of influence

Through site visits in the Health Department and City government

- Understand the structure and function of the Health Department, and its interaction with State and Federal health agencies
- Be familiar with the responsibility for disease prevention and health promotion programming and services carried out, such as community health education programs, nutrition programs, youth violence prevention, emergency preparedness, drug treatment and maternal and child health programs
- Identify vulnerable populations targeted for intervention by the Health Department, and describe the impact of resources that are provided

Skills related to your projects

- Be able to review data relating to a specific public health problem and formulate an approach to remediate the problem; use information technology and network with others working on similar issues to propose a solution to the problem
- Identify and utilize major national and state guidelines for improving the health status of the U.S. population, e.g. “Healthy People 2010” in setting priorities for your project

- Communicate clearly and effectively, through presentations and reports, the levels of risk from real or potential hazards and the rationale for selected interventions. Target groups for communication include health professionals, key stakeholders, the public and the media

For medical students and physicians

- Understand the critical role of the practicing physician in recognizing preventable illness and mobilizing community resources for prevention
- Become familiar with health resources available to your patients through the Health Department (e.g. immunizations, free HIV testing, drug treatment, tobacco cessation, home nursing)
- Understand the role of primary care physicians in contributing to the care of vulnerable patients, including buprenorphine administration, serving as a consultant/resource for public health programs, working at Health Department clinics, being a resource of information for health-related social services, and serving as a policy advocate on issues such as health insurance and funding for prevention/public health

******* *If you are interested in learning more about current fellowship opportunities, please contact Katie Burns, Kathleen.Burns@baltimorecity.gov, (410) 396-4387. ********

¹ *Internship objectives are based upon the following curricula:*

a) Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, General Preventive Medicine Residency Program, Core Competencies During the Practicum Year. 2007. Received from Dr Miriam Alexander, Residency Director, July 13, 2007.

b) University of Maryland, Public Health and Prevention, Learning Objectives. Fourth-year medical school rotation. Received from Dr Judy Rubin, Course Director, August 1, 2007.

c) Allan, J et al. Clinical Prevention and Population Health: Curriculum Framework for Health Professions. 2004. *Am J Prev Med* 2004; 27 (5): 471-476.