Public Health Practice

Stories from the Field
Student Practicum Experiences
Spring 2011
The University of Texas School of Public Health
The practicum experience is an integral part of the MPH curriculum. Public health students are provided with the opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge to real world settings through which they make a meaningful contribution to a public health organization.

Under the guidance of a community preceptor and faculty sponsor, students from all divisions gain a deeper understanding of public health practice, interact with professionals in the field, and expand their repertoire of professional skills.

This fourth-edition e-magazine showcases student practicum experiences throughout the Spring 2011 semester. (Prior semesters may be accessed through the e-book, a collection of student abstracts and e-magazines describing their experiences.)
Practicum Topics
Serving Size: 1 Practicum per Student
Servings per e-Magazine: 46

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- Occupational Health Data Analysis: DeSean Rodgers

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Aside from learning about analytical data and mapping techniques, I became more familiar with the various pollution control programs and services provided by the City of Houston. I had the opportunity to accompany city employees on environmental complaint investigations. I also learned more about the structure and functioning of government environmental programs. In the future I hope to be professionally involved in environmental policy and/or enforcement.

“I learned more about the structure and functioning of government environmental programs.”

**Public Health Significance**

The Public Health Essential Services that most closely relate to my practicum experience:

**Research**
I contributed to an EPA funded research project that sought to compare older methods of air monitoring (mobile ambient air monitoring) to a less frequently used approach in the field, differential absorption lidar, or DIAL.

**Diagnose and Investigate**
Potential health problems and health hazards as they relate to environmental quality were investigated during environmental complaint investigation trips.

**Enforce**
If a company or individual was found to be in non-compliance with city, state, or federal environmental laws during the investigation, enforcement action was taken. In this way, public health and safety was ensured.
Public Health Significance

My practicum experience with the Corporate Health, Safety and Environmental division of CB&I focused on the public health essential service of monitoring environmental health at domestic and international CB&I sites. There were two projects during my practicum that specifically focused on monitoring: (1) the creation of the database in Microsoft Access for the collection of facility environmental permit information, and (2) The collection of recycling information that was compiled in a datasheet. The two projects are essential in Environmental Management. Environmental management is a process that begins with planning, doing (implementing), checking (monitoring) and then acting (adjusting after monitoring). During my practicum, monitoring was included in the checking portion of Environmental Management. The data collected concerning sustainability allowed us to create a benchmark for sustainability to which the company can compare future recycling efforts.

CB&I Corporate Health, Safety & Environmental

By: Clint Pinion, Jr., MPH

During the spring semester, I worked with the Corporate Health, Safety & Environmental division of Chicago Bridge and Iron Inc. (CB&I), based in The Woodlands, Texas. I was involved in several projects concerning Environmental Management on a global scale. I worked with the Global Environmental Director, Dr. Shelley Brewer, to address environmental issues that arise with a company having a global presence. I worked to revamp the company’s Environmental Management Training presentation.

Public Health Significance

Making it more internationally applicable, I also created a database in Microsoft Access for the collection of facility environmental permit information. The database allows Dr. Brewer to monitor the status of each facility’s permits.

I was able to correspond with domestic and international CB&I facilities to collect recycling information. I also visited four CB&I sites at which I collected recycling information. This information was compiled into a Sustainability datasheet.

Duties during my Practicum

- Created a database in Access to collect facility Environmental Permits.
- Updated Environmental Management training presentation.
- Researched alternatives to Construction Debris land-filling.
- Corresponded with domestic and international facilities to collect recycling information.

“...To address environmental issues that arise with a company having a global presence.”

Full safety attire worn while visiting CB&I sites: Tinted/non-tinted safety glasses, hardhat, long-sleeve shirt, and steel toe boots.

Environmental Management is a cycle. It requires a process of planning, doing, checking, and then acting.

*Created in Microsoft Word
Occupational Health Data Analysis

Statistical Summary of Research Data Access

By: DeSean J. Rodgers

Wyle Integrated Science & Engineering is a contractor for NASA that has multiple Occupational Health issues that it works on.

I served as an Intern in the Epidemiology and Information Management section for NASA Astronauts.

Our goal was to use statistical data and comprehensive analysis tools to draw parallels between Astronaut Health and various risk factors in space.

My most significant project was the design of a new project algorithm model put in place to help establish continuity of data analysis across multiple departments. Using this model, all departments will be able to share data more freely and smoothly. The above graphic is a page from a 13 page summary report I created highlighting the accessibility of research data to various outposts. The analysis involved odds ratios and pie graphs among other measurement tools.

Due to HIPAA standards involving patient medical records and data, I cannot divulge the results of any projects. However, the impact of this work will be greatly felt by all astronauts, new and old, who come into the corps. New policies and procedures can be put in place in order to better position the astronaut for healthier space travel in the future.

Special events/ duties during your practicum

- Completed 4 projects dealing with data analysis
- Joined a special algorithm project task force
- Utilized STATA in real-world applications

Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.
~William James

Spring 2011 ● DeSean J. Rodgers ● Wyle Integrated Science & Engineering ● Occupational Health Data Analysis

Wyle Industries Inc.
Headquarters
http://www.wyle.com/Aerospace/Pages/AerospaceGroup
Surgical interventions in pancreatitis

Searching for the risk factors that lead to surgical interventions in pediatric patients with pancreatitis

By: DHAVAL CHAUHAN

The work in my practicum involved data collection from the last 20 years’ medical records at Texas Children’s Hospital and analysis of the data to look for the factors associated with surgical interventions. I went through the charts of 130 patients to look for the necessary data and made a database. After doing a preliminary analysis, I have come to conclusion that the number of attacks per year, anatomical abnormalities of biliary and pancreatic duct and total number of attacks throughout lifetime are associated with surgical interventions in children with pancreatitis. Of course, a study in this direction with increased sample size and a prospective study design will help us to establish accurate indications for surgical interventions.

**Highlights:**

- Interaction with my community preceptor: Dr. Oluyinka Olutoye – one of the finest fetal and pediatric surgeons in United States
- Working with people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Learning different treatment modalities to treat pancreatitis including medical and surgical interventions.

**Public Health Significance**

Indications for surgical interventions are clearly defined in the case of an adult who has pancreatitis (inflammation of pancreas) but there are no established facts for the pediatric population. Although relatively uncommon, pancreatitis especially in early life leads to significant morbidity in terms of decreased physical growth and poor quality of life. Attacks of pancreatitis lead to multiple admissions per year to hospitals causing significant burden on the healthcare system. Among children with chronic pancreatitis, some may benefit by surgical intervention but it is difficult to predict it beforehand. Thus, there is a need to identify clinical risk factors that can predict the need of surgical intervention in children.

The Public Health Essential Service(s) (PHES) that most closely relates to my practicum experience is Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

At the completion of my project it is my goal to understand the factors that can predict effective measures to treat this chronic condition. My practicum site: Texas Children’s Hospital is committed to form a community of healthy children by providing the finest possible pediatric patient care, education and research.
Who’s to blame?

Public Health Significance

During my practicum I became a part of the public health research community. My host research group is lead by Dr. Herbert Dupont, an award winning scientist and physician in the area of infectious disease. Researchers are an important part of public health because they search for innovative solutions to health problems. DuPont’s group researches may topics of infectious disease from many scopes including both basic science and clinical science.

Clostridium Difficile Classification

I did my practicum at the a local large, tertiary care medical center located in the Texas medical center. There they have a prospective surveillance research project taking place in the area of Clostridium difficile. C. diff is a gram positive pathogenic bacterium that grows in the human gastrointestinal system and is the leading cause of nosocomial infections.

Practicum Duties

- Determined whether patients with C. difficile infection were community-associated or hospital-associated.
- Attended/participated in weekly meetings/journal club
- Give an oral presentation specifying specific findings


My duties were to classify each strain of C. diff presented by patients being enrolled in the study, as hospital associated (acquired within a healthcare facility) or community-associated (no acquired within a healthcare facility). These terms are specifically defined in the literature and were applied to over 380 patients within the study database. Resulting, 62% of positive C. diff cases were deemed hospital associated.

Determining whether C. diff infections are hospital associated is a big issue in public health. If we are able to find a way to classify all cases of this ailment then it is possible that healthcare cost for the patients will decrease. If hospitals are at fault shouldn’t they be the ones to pay?

“Thou art a boil, a plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle, in my corrupted blood.”
-William Shakesphere

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An unruly patient being injected with Tres Dificile by a hospital nurse.
http://www.cartoonstock.com/directory/c/C_difficile.asp

Spring 2010 • MarCia Ekworomadu • Clostridium Classification Project
Infectious Disease Prevention Training

Environmental Intervention Strategies for Infectious Diseases

By: Chioma Ikoku

I was fortunate enough to be introduced to the world of Community Health Workers (CHWs) this semester. I was impressed by their roles as liaisons between doctors and the community at large, and by their potential to be a strong driving force in the health status of their communities. I was charged with the task of creating infectious disease based prevention training modules for CHWs in South and Central America.

I went about this by developing materials that outlined the causes, symptoms, and prevention techniques of vector-borne; food- and water-borne; dust- and soil-borne; and air- and animal-borne diseases. This information was then used to create 2-hour long training modules that included PowerPoint presentations, group learning activities, and illustrated reference flashcards that summarized the presented information.

“I went about this by developing materials that outlined the causes, symptoms, and prevention techniques of vector-borne; food- and water-borne; dust- and soil-borne; and air- and animal-borne diseases. This information was then used to create 2-hour long training modules that included PowerPoint presentations, group learning activities, and illustrated reference flashcards that summarized the presented information.”

Public Health Significance

I wrote in my vector-borne diseases literature review that “by educating the population in endemic regions on disease control through culturally sensitive, relatable communications, Community Health Workers can significantly diminish the medical, public health and economic consequences of certain disease burdens for their region.”

The world is rapidly shrinking; travel is becoming easier and faster, and a local health concern in Central America could easily become a global epidemic. My aim with the developed training modules was to begin to empower the people of Central America, through the help of CHWs, to take their health into their own hands.

Informing local institutions and individuals about public health needs and practices protects visitors to the area from contracting and spreading avoidable infections. It also protects future generations growing up in those regions from the social and economic impact of high disease burdens.

“The strongest indicator for infectious disease morbidity in a given population is poverty.”

Accomplishments

- Completed literature reviews of endemic infectious diseases impacting South and Central America
- Collected background information on education levels of Community Health Workers (CHWs)
- Developed region-specific infectious disease training modules for CHWs

A child playing in stagnant water is at risk for water-borne diseases like Cholera.

AP Photo / Pavel Rahman

CDC Photo

A child playing in stagnant water is at risk for water-borne diseases like Cholera.

AP Photo / Pavel Rahman

The training instructed people to “manage their risks” when it came to disease prevention. For example, if they could not avoid being outdoors for extended periods during peak feeding times for certain arthropods, they were encouraged to use pesticides containing DEET when possible.

Spring 2011 • Chioma Ikoku • UTHSC-Houston School of Public Health • Infectious Disease Prevention Training
Research projects that provide evidence for new policies and plans, as well as educating the community and healthcare providers.

While I primarily worked for the rotavirus study, I did participate in some groundwork for upcoming projects. My primary duties were data entry, data verification, and primary data abstraction from CDC data sets and medical records. Through my work and interaction with project leaders I was able to learn about field epidemiology, primary data collection, and research management.

The Immunization Project is a proactive organization that is dedicated to developing and implementing programs and policies to keep children safe from vaccine-preventable diseases. The Immunization Project participates in research projects that provide evidence for new policies and plans, as well as educating the community and healthcare providers.

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The Highlights

- Experiencing the day-to-day workings of an ongoing research project.
- Meeting a deadline for the CDC.
- Meeting and developing friendships with a number of amazing public health advocates.

“Rotavirus basically affects everybody by the time they are 5. If we took blood samples of all people, it would be rare to find someone who has not had rotavirus.” – Paul Offit
Reducing Dental Caries through a School-based Sealant Program

By: Geetanjali Kamath

“Project Saving Smiles” is a community-based school-linked dental sealant program headed by Dr. Johanna DeYoung of the Oral Health Bureau, HDHSS. This program, begun in October 2008, aims to decrease dental caries incidence and increase school attendance by holding several missions throughout each academic year. The target population is economically disadvantaged 2nd-grade children studying in Houston schools. Each mission consists of screening the children, followed by fluoride application & placement of Glass-Ionomer (Fuji IX brand) dental sealants on caries susceptible teeth. My duties comprised mainly of assembling data from their missions, examining patterns, analyzing the data and reporting to my supervisors. I also attended 2 missions during my practicum and got familiar with the field. I evaluated the program for effectiveness, using sealant retention at follow-up as an indicator. Follow-up data from the school year 2008-09 showed more than 62% retention of sealants, reaching 70% for occlusal surfaces of permanent 1st molars. My final product is the evaluation report.

Public Health Significance

My practicum site addresses several important public health services (nos. 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10). Most prominently, it addresses services no. 3, 4 and 7.

During each mission, Ms. Katrima Matthews, our health educator, held interactive information sessions on dental care and hygiene. Two tests were taken by the children, one before and one after the session, to see what they had learned. And they did learn a lot. Dr. DeYoung and her staff members Dr. Ladrillo and Dr. Aikins, all played a vital role in forming community partnerships to accomplish the aims of the project. They coordinated with schools, parents, other clinical dentists and volunteers and formed a dedicated and capable team. They sent out invitations to 177 schools in the year 2008-09, out of which 42 agreed to participate. Of the 2045 children that year, 1935, or about 95% were economically disadvantaged. They had little or no access to dental care. The school-based nature of this project provided them with the required services. Efforts are on to increase participation rates. Ongoing research focuses on the practicality of GIC based sealants to reduce the incidence of caries.
S. aureus Carriage Status at the NAM Children’s Clinic

By: Erin McHugh

This semester, I participated in a practicum on the north side of Houston, with Dr. Heather Moore at the Northwest Assisted Ministries Children’s Clinic.

Since 2008 the NAM clinic has been the primary site of a Staphylococcus aureus carriage study. At NAM, patients are recruited to participate in the study by volunteering to give two nasal swabs, which are then analyzed in the lab at UTSPH.

This study and practicum will continue to serve as the basis for research conducted by Dr. Eric Brown, the UT medical school, and various Master’s Theses at the School of Public Health.

Public Health Significance

1. Monitor: This practicum helps monitor Community Acquired (CA) Staphylococcus infections in the clinic patient population. Monitoring infection and carriage status will also monitor changes in infection rates and provide data aid in developing prevention programs.

2. Diagnose and Investigate: This practicum is focused on understanding the potential health hazard of S. aureus carriage in a community by investigating rates of nasal carriage infection.

3. Research: This practicum is research based. From a public health perspective, the research done at the NAM clinic will hopefully provide new insight to the issue and provide creative solutions to prevent the spread of Staph. Infection in the community.
Implementing school-based screenings to Prevent Sudden Cardiac Arrest-HEARTS™ Program

By: Ketan Patel

HEARTS™ program was designed to assess the efficiency and economic feasibility of a short, directed cardiovascular screening program outside of the clinic aimed at 6th grade students. The study was designed to identify risk factors middle school children that could lead to sudden cardiac death. Screening process included a short medical questionnaire, physical exam focusing on the cardiovascular system (including blood pressures), electrocardiogram or EKG, and echocardiogram. My role as a pediatric nephrology fellow was to help develop and implement a comprehensive but efficient manner to perform blood pressure measurements. I was involved in performing BP measurements using portable devices as determined by national guidelines.

Public Health Significance

This school based screening program is vital to help diagnose and investigate signs and/or symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). Many children have undiagnosed heart conditions and as many as 1 in 100,000 can go on to develop SCA1. Current practice to evaluate the heart is based on history taking and physical exam at the yearly visit or sports physical. This program is used to identify additional measures that can be implemented to provide additional information to the physician to diagnose and treat heart conditions early, before they lead to sudden cardiac arrest or death. Screening programs in other parts of the world have helped to reduce the overall morbidity and mortality associated with heart conditions. Significant findings of this project have included identifying children with unrecognized hypertension, congenital heart defects, and even coarctation (narrowing) of the aorta (a large blood vessel in the organ the delivers blood/oxygen to the rest of the body).


Special events

- Interacting with the children
- Pep rally for students by Houston Rockets, Clutch, and Power Dancers
- Using time to educate children on diet and exercise

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”
~Benjamin Franklin

Nutritional analysis in children receiving cancer chemotherapy
By: Mayurika Pise

I worked for a study evaluating the relationship between Caloric intake and chemotherapy markers in children diagnosed with cancer at the M D Anderson Cancer Center.

Nutritional data is very inadequate in young children. We aimed to fill this blank.

My work involved meeting parents at their clinical appointments and collecting 24 hour dietary recalls. These recalls were then entered in the Nutrition data System for research software.

I was involved in conducting the recalls, collecting clinical data, entering data, doing literature reviews, and bio-statistical analysis.

At the end of the practicum I wrote a report on the progress made in the study and presented the data to my preceptor and the students working with her. More subjects will have to be enrolled before we can publish results.

Public Health Significance

In my project we are monitoring the caloric intake of children to identify its relation to chemotherapy. Investigating low/mid/high calorie association with response to chemotherapy will help in designing diets aiding chemotherapy.

The main aim is to research for new insights in helping chemotherapy for ways in which parents feel they are active participants in the solutions.

M D Anderson is a world renowned institution which is determined to fight cancer. Nutrition, as an adjunct to curative medication, is prevalent in adults. However this data is still inadequate in children. The Children’s Cancer Hospital is encouraging trials focusing on nutrition related research in young children.

I met with a numbers of parents from diverse backgrounds, but a common will to combat cancer. They are receptive to diet modifications if it helps their child’s treatment. If caloric intake is found to have a relationship with chemotherapy, providing them with adequate dietary information will be empowering.

“The wise man should consider that health is the greatest of human blessings. Let food be your medicine.”
—Hippocrates
Public Health Significance

My practicum experience is related to the Essential Services of Public Health because it utilizes public health at a federal, state and local level.

The Public Health Essential Service (PHES) that relates most to my practicum experience is research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

My host organization contributes to public health through research to advance quality of health and medical therapeutic methods. UT Health Science Center also links public health practice to the academic world.

My project contributes to public health by conducting research studies to help improve knowledge and therapeutic methods dealing with diabetes.

My Journey into Clinical Research

By: Laura Gabriela Reyes

I did my practicum at University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio. I was part of a genetic-clinical research study whose goal was to study gene expression in Mexican Americans.

My involvement was mainly on the clinical side at Audie Murphy VA, though I did view the laboratory research.

The approach taken by the clinical research team was data collection by three samples, (1) Oral glucose tolerance test (2) Muscle Biopsy (3) Fat biopsy. My duties on the project were literature research, coding/data analysis, helping out during patient visits, assisting with IRB amendments and approval.

In addition participating in research writing from older studies. The study found family history on maternal side

Special events/ duties during your practicum

• Viewed fat and muscle Biopsies procedure
• Participated in abstract and journal submissions
• Data Analysis and literature research

“I learned what clinical research entails and how it differs from laboratory research.”
Chronic neurological diseases like stroke, Parkinson’s, multiple sclerosis, and Alzheimer’s, etc., impose a great toll on our society’s ill health. With the emphasis on prevention and rehabilitation of the debilitating pathologies, the laboratory of Dr. Xia at the department of Neurosurgery UT Med School, toils to explore and research the potential of integrative medicine in treatment and cure of these conditions through scientifically proven methods in order to cure the patient as a whole. Working in this laboratory and while reviewing the literature, I learnt the importance of integrative medicine – CAM, and the need for public health awareness on which of the proposed therapies are virtually curative and which are possibly harmful. The site of my practicum and many other research laboratories are devoted today to evaluate and investigate the prospective approach of acupuncture in mainstream medicine and the possible impact of this on the future of medicine can only be marveled upon at this stage.

Overview of Acupuncture in Neurological Pathology – a novel approach!

By: HarleenKaur Sandhu

Acupuncture is a type of Traditional Chinese Medicine that involves the use of needles and/or moxibustion (the application of heat to acupoints) for the prevention and treatment of disease. Nearly 80% of world’s population depends upon traditional medicine rather than the Western medicine. Application of acupuncture in treatment of chronic neurological ailments is becoming widely accepted in the west and extensive research is being performed. I was acquainted with one such potential research base at the department of Neurosurgery at UT medical school. The chronicity of the symptoms and course of diseases like Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s and stroke sequelae has provided a challenge to the neuro-researchers since ages posing a daunting question on treatment and rehab. At my practicum site the research team headed by my preceptor, seeks to explore and evaluate this question through finding a potential answer in acupuncture. My work here involved neurological projects including acupuncture research directed by Dr. Xia and this provided me with a chance to look into this novel approach more closely and in depth through extensive review of literature and the review of results. They have brought forth the potential neuroprotective effects of electro-acupuncture(EA), probable mechanisms via various neurotransmitters and opioid receptors that have been implicated and have even proposed a new modality called Superficial Electrical Stimulation – combining the theories of EA and western medicine. Even though the results are encouraging, further research in exploring the mechanisms is of highest desideratum.

Public Health Significance

Chronic neurological diseases like stroke, Parkinson’s, multiple sclerosis, and Alzheimer’s, etc., impose a great toll on our society’s ill health. With the emphasis on prevention and rehabilitation of the debilitating pathologies, the laboratory of Dr. Xia at the department of Neurosurgery UT Med School, toils to explore and research the potential of integrative medicine in treatment and cure of these conditions through scientifically proven methods in order to cure the patient as a whole. Working in this laboratory and while reviewing the literature, I learnt the importance of integrative medicine – CAM, and the need for public health awareness on which of the proposed therapies are virtually curative and which are possibly harmful. The site of my practicum and many other research laboratories are devoted today to evaluate and investigate the prospective approach of acupuncture in mainstream medicine and the possible impact of this on the future of medicine can only be marveled upon at this stage.

Extent of impact

- Noticeable improvement in some Parkinson’s Disease symptomatology
- Proven positive influence on anxiety, depression, and pain relief in Alzheimer’s
- Increased acceptance and satisfaction levels of patients

“There must be something to acupuncture. You never see any sick porcupines ” – Bob Goddard.
New staging system for Hepatocellular carcinoma

Use of serum VEGF to predict survival in Hepatocellular carcinoma

By: Neeraj Shah

Presently the staging systems involved in predicting survival in advanced hepatocellular carcinoma are not adequate. None of them have so far incorporated any serum biomarkers. VEGF is an angiogenic protein and more aggressive cancer cells express higher levels of VEGF. Consequently we can use VEGF as a marker for more severe disease.

My project involved whether incorporating of serum VEGF levels in the CLIP score, an existing prognostic system used for classifying hepatocellular carcinoma patients, gives a better prediction of survival.

This project was being carried out in GI Medical Oncology Department at MD Anderson Cancer Center. When I visited the department, I got to know about this project and I expressed interest to take part. Consequently, this project became my practicum.

Public Health Significance

The Public Health Essential Service(s) (PHES) that most closely relates to my practicum experience is number ten “Research for new insights & innovative solutions to health problems”.

With its cutting edge research, MD Anderson Cancer Center makes a great contribution towards better treatment and prevention of cancer in the community.

For finding out novel and better treatments of any cancer, it is imperative that patients with advanced and incurable cancers be enrolled in clinical trials.

With hepatocellular carcinoma classification of patients with advanced cancers for enrollment in clinical trials has been a problem. My project shall help to better stratify the patients with advanced hepatocellular carcinoma, so that appropriate patients are selected for enrollment in clinical trials. This would contribute to better clinical trials and research for treatment of HCC in the future.

Spring 2011 ● Neeraj Shah ● MD Anderson Cancer Center ● New staging system for Hepatocellular carcinoma
Pubertal Endocrine Disruption and Mammary Gland Development

By: Kelly Turner

I worked on a reproductive research project involving mammary gland development in mice experiencing endocrine disruption at puberty. The treatment and experimental group were fed a diet lacking phytoestrogens. We treated the experimental group with letrozole, an aromatase inhibitor (AI), during puberty.

We found developmental differences in the tissue from both groups. The phytoestrogen-free diet resulted in severely stunted mammary glands. The mammary glands from the experimental group were morphologically different than the control group in that there were reduced terminal end buds (TEBs) and increased tertiary branching.

In addition to developmental differences, treatment with letrozole resulted in precancerous lesions.

Public Health Significance

This project is of public health significance because breast cancer is the second cause of cancer deaths in women (American Cancer Society, Cancer Facts and Figures 2010).

Our research findings suggest that a diet including phytoestrogens is critical for normal mammary gland development. Phytoestrogens are found, for example, in legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds.

From our findings, endocrine disruption at puberty with the treatment of letrozole and a diet lacking phytoestrogens caused abnormal development of the mammary gland and increased the risk of breast cancer.

This is relevant to the field of public health because overall exposure to estrogen is a risk factor for the development of breast cancer. However, we found that phytoestrogens are necessary for normal mammary development and endocrine disruption at puberty resulted in precancerous lesions in adulthood.

“"A good scientist is a person in whom the childhood quality of perennial curiosity lingers on. Once he gets an answer, he has other questions.”

-Fredrick Seitz
West Nile Virus Infection

Long-Term Persistence of IgM Antibody in West Nile Patients
By: Chris Yan

I worked with Dr. Kristy Murray’s West Nile patient cohort of 150 Houston-based patients, who she has been following since the 2002 outbreak. Many patients have exhibited chronic symptoms over a duration of many years since initial infection, and have demonstrated a persistently high level of IgM antibody titer, which is indicative of persistence of the virus itself in the body.

My duties included interacting with patients in their homes and on campus. I obtained blood and urine samples for our laboratory, and performed assays on their blood samples for IgM.

The final results indicated high levels of IgM in many patients, even 8 years after initial infection. These results will be incorporated into a scientific manuscript for publication.

Special events
The 2011 Cohort Patient Meeting was our biannual event, in which 50 patients came to campus to give interviews and lab samples. I oversaw the phlebotomy procedures on all patients during this event.

Public Health Significance
This practicum experience provided services 1-3, and 10 of the essential public health services, namely monitoring, diagnosing and investigating West Nile virus infections in Harris County, educating and informing our patients, and conducting research on new insights to West Nile infections.

The most relevant service to my specific experience was diagnosing and investigating the infections themselves, as my responsibilities were mainly concerned with obtaining and assaying blood samples. Our aim was to discern whether the virus was persisting in patients through testing IgM titer levels.

Our patients displayed long-lasting neuropathological and renal symptoms of infection, which, together with blood tests, indicated that the virus had not been fully destroyed in the body. These results will broaden our understanding of West Nile Virus and hopefully lead to more research on how to combat the infection in patients.

West Nile Virus is an Arbovirus, meaning it is transmitted by arthropod vectors.

Culex quinquefasciatus, a major vector of West Nile virus in the United States today.

Public Health Significance

Sexual health is an essential part of everyone’s life - be they young, old, single or married. All individuals have a right to safe sex, but many lack the tools to resist barriers towards safe sex – coercion, decreased knowledge, power struggles, and violence. Public health officials can use their knowledge to bestow the right of safe sex on everyone.

The two essential public health services that this project will address is to inform, educate, and empower people about health issues, and evaluate effectiveness, accessibility and quality of personal and population-based health services.

It is important for us to provide these services to people, especially populations that are at higher risk of developing STIs, HIV, and unwanted pregnancy. Interventions like this will decrease the burden of bad health outcomes caused by unhealthy, preventable behaviors. An intervention started in the BTGHER could be used in any ER that needs it.

BTGHER Needs Assessment

By: Kasia Kimmel

When I do my practicum, it will be over the summer and will be a needs assessment for a sexual health intervention in the BTGHER. This research will become my culminating experience.

In addition to interviewing patients and healthcare providers assessing what sexual health information they would like to have, I will be using the Condom Use Self-Efficacy Scale to decide what determinants I would like to change.

The final product will be my culminating experience, and maybe, in the future, establishing a short sexual health intervention in the ER.

“Sexual health is more than freedom from sexual disease or disorders ... Sexual health is non-exploitive and respectful of self and others ... Sexual health is dependent upon an individual’s well-being and sense of self-esteem. Sexual health requires trust, honesty, and communication.”

-Eli Coleman, Ph.D., Director, Program in Human Sexuality, University of Minnesota Medical School

Condoms = love
citizenpinoy.wordpress.com

Ben Taub General Hospital Emergency Room from culturemap.com
Adolescent Suicide Prevention

How to Save a Life
By: Ousswa Kudia

This semester I had the opportunity to perform my practicum with the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) where I worked on creating a program for suicide prevention for adolescents in the rural counties of Region 6 of Texas. These counties included Austin, Colorado, Liberty, Matagorda, Walker, Waller, and Wharton County.

I analyzed county data in order to discern which counties had high rates of suicide in their population. Following that, I searched what evidence based interventions would best suit the counties. Lastly, I compiled my findings and recommendations in a user friendly format to present to the school districts of the counties involved.

The At-Risk intervention was the program chosen where high school teachers engage in an interactive web training session where they learn how to identify and help adolescents at risk of suicide.

Highlights
- Firearms are the most common method used for suicide
- Depression is the leading cause of suicide.

Public Health Significance

The initial phase of my practicum was to monitor the health status of the counties to see which areas had the higher rates of suicide by comparing them at the county, state, and national level.

I then diagnosed and investigated the problems adolescents face when living in rural communities and how the built environment around them affected them. I also investigated what methods were the most common in each county:

Lastly, the intervention that I proposed to implement in the counties was to educate and empower teachers on what suicide is, how to identify warning signs, and how to approach and discuss concerns with adolescents properly. Students spend the majority of the day at school with their teachers. Teachers are vital gatekeepers in a teenager’s life and they are usually the most time that teens spend with adults.

“Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in adolescents.”
Public health significance  
Depressive disorder is very common among cancer patients, about 15% of cancer patients have depressive disorder. Disparities in depression diagnosis, use of antipsychotic medications, and resource utilization place physicians a huge challenge regarding treatment and management of depressive disorder in cancer patients. Up to date, very few studies have addressed these disparities. My study aims are to evaluate the usage prevalence, prescribing patterns, and determine the exposure determinants and resource utilization of two classes of antipsychotics at a comprehensive cancer care center in the years 2002 and 2007. Once accomplished, findings from the study will provide important information to establish a better guideline for treatment and management of depressive disorder in patients with cancers.

Approach  
During my practicum, I worked on a study aiming at identifying disparities in terms of resource utilization and antipsychotic medication use in cancer patients. The following sentences will describe methods I use for the study: Retrospective chart review was performed to gather data on patients’ characteristics, co-morbidities, prescribing patterns, usage of antidepressants, and resource utilization between two calendar years 2002 and 2007. To differentiate differences in patient demographic characteristics, prescription patterns, and resource utilization, chi-square and unpair t-test were performed. Mantel-Haenszel stratified analysis was conducted to evaluate the effect of sex and ethnicity on usage patterns. Logistic regression analysis was carried out to determine exposure determinants to antipsychotics. P-values <0.05, two-sided were considered statistically significant.

Findings  
The overall sample of the study consisted of 732 patients (287 for 2002 and 445 for 2007). Significant differences in sex and ethnicity were found in the prescribing and usage patterns of antipsychotics. Specifically, females were more often to see a psychiatrist (p<0.001) and received atypical agents than men (p<0.001). In terms of resource utilization, females and non-Caucasians had significantly more emergency room visits than males and Caucasians (p=0.04, p=0.024, respectively). The utilization of an atypical antipsychotic agent was significantly associated with seeing a psychiatrist, higher number of clinic visits, higher number of antipsychotic prescriptions over a year, depression, anxiety, and psychiatric illness.

Study findings indicate that disparities exist in the management and treatment of psychosis in cancer patients.

Essential services of Public Health  
One of the essential services of public health is “assessment/evaluation” of public health problems for better intervention and prevention. My study primarily focuses on assessing disparities regarding the usage of antipsychotics and resource utilization between males and females, Caucasians and non-Caucasians patients at a health care center.
Long-Term Care Culture Change

Embracing Person-Centered Care in a Nursing Home
By: Laura Niles

I left my job to pursue a graduate degree that would allow me the opportunity to promote health and wellness in older adults, especially those residing in long-term care.

Working with older adults in the memory care unit of Lexington Place Nursing and Rehabilitation, I learned new and innovative ways to enrich the daily lives of long-term care residents. My dedicated, passionate community preceptor, Suzanne Perry-Slavens, taught me the importance of using alternatives to antipsychotics to reduce agitation and depression in residents living with dementia.

This became the focus of my practicum: planning, implementing and measuring a specific type of non-pharmacological intervention: music therapy.

A music therapy program was installed, among other daily interventions for residents, such as jazz club, poetry readings, Spanish class and cooking demonstrations. A post-test will be taken to measure the effects of music therapy on aggression and depression, since the pilot program is complete.

One of the main highlights of the practicum, among many, was the interaction with residents and their impact on my education. I learned a great deal about the experience of the older adult living in long-term care.

Speaking with Jesus Mendoza, a long-time resident of Lexington Place, about the new music player in his room, he told me he enjoys the music that plays automatically throughout the day and how it reminds him of his mother and the music they played together when he was a child.

Public Health Significance

One of the essential public health services addressed by this practicum was the development of policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts. Though much of the practicum was focused on resident health, developing a comprehensive plan for implementing culture change principles in a large nursing home involves educating the nursing home staff about these principles and getting their buy-in on implementation. Administrative and direct-care staff collaboration was and continues to be essential in implementing even the simplest objectives of culture change.

Evaluation of the pilot program, though ongoing, is essential to determining the effectiveness of the program in the nursing home and its impact on resident quality of life.

Many of the wellness programs at Lexington Place have proven to be effective and can be replicated in other nursing homes in Houston. Collaboration with other public health professionals who work on aging initiatives will help build programs such as these and illustrate the importance of person-centered care at the local, state and national level. As the national population of Baby Boomers turns 65 this year, and dementia diagnoses continue to rise to epidemic proportions, programs to enrich and improve long-term care resident quality of life will be important and in high demand throughout the country.

“Providing meaningful interaction and stimulation for these incredible residents can change their outlook and their entire living experience.”

Spring 2011 • Laura Niles • Lexington Place Nursing & Rehabilitation • Health Promotion in Long-Term Care
Upon completion of my practicum, I will have the following products: (1) feasibility and usability testing protocols; (2) usability testing surveys for youth; (3) usability testing focus group materials for adults; and (4) outcome evaluation survey for the study’s efficacy trial.

Public Health Significance

Applying innovative strategies to prevent teen pregnancy and STI rates among American Indian/Alaska Native youth addresses several components of the Public Health Essential Service(s) (PHES): inform, educate and empower teens about sexual health issues; mobilize community partnerships at various tribal organizations and regions across the nation to solve sexual health problems; and evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.

I believe the most related component to my practicum experience and given the context of the four-year project is: evaluation of the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services. In this case, we plan to access parameters of adaptation to make this evidence-based teen pregnancy/STI prevention program effective and more accessible to American Indian/Alaska youth in Arizona, Alaska and the Pacific Northwest regions of the country.

The University of Texas Prevention Research Center prides itself in its service to the state of Texas and the entire nation as a collaborating center with 37 other centers in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Prevention Research Center Program. Its primary mission for the next five years is to impact child and adolescent health through a collaboration of academic, public health, and community partnerships engaged in scholarly, community-based prevention research, research translation, and education.

I completed my practicum as an American Evaluation Association Graduate Evaluation Diversity Intern with the University of Texas Prevention Research Center (UTPRC). We are working on a multi-site project to adapt, implement and evaluate an evidence-based teen pregnancy/STI prevention program (“It’s your game, keep it real”) for American Indian/Alaska Native youth. My duties have involved developing and revising process and outcome evaluation tools and drafting protocols for evaluation activities for our collaborating regions. Additionally, I’ve participated in research management activities such as attending team meetings and providing feedback on study materials, presentations/publications.

Culturally responsive evaluation is fueled by collaboration with communities and organizations invested in the improvement of a population’s health and quality of life through planning, design, implementation and evaluation of effective public health programs.

“Cultural responsive evaluation yields truth about a public health programs.”
Helping Employees Feel Like a Million
By: Joanna Russell

This spring, I worked at Shell with the Worksite Wellness Coordinator on improving employee health in the workplace. One program I worked on, Feel Like a Million, was a six-week wellness challenge designed to engage participants in physical, nutritional, and social/emotional activities. This program was a team challenge offered to Shell’s women’s network. Teams of five were formed and they worked to earn their daily dollars by participating in activities such as 60 minutes of physical activity, eating 5 fruits and vegetables a day, or sleeping at least 7 hours per night. The dollars each individual earned contributed to the team’s bank account balance. This challenge allowed individuals to improve their health and compete as a team. The challenge will end on May 6th and we expect to see positive results!

Public Health Significance

The Public Health Essential Service (PHES) that most closely relates to my practicum experience at Shell is the service of informing, educating, and empowering people about health issues. As worksite coordinators, we are in charge of making sure the employees are aware of the services that Shell health provides. We also create programs, such as the Feel Like a Million wellness challenge, to empower employees to take control of improving their health. During these challenges, we coordinate informational sessions with nutritionists and personal trainers to give people the tools they need to succeed in their wellness goals.

Overall, Shell also practices the PHES of researching for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems. As we see an increase in chronic conditions and obesity in the workplace, employers must remain cutting edge on how to keep their workforce healthy.
For Moms and Babies Everywhere: March of Dimes Houston

By: Angelina Upshaw

Working for Program Services at March of Dimes allowed me to contribute to various programmatic efforts, particularly Comenzando Bien (prenatal education and support), NICU Family Support, Antepartum Support, and March for Babies.

I was able to utilize my skills to assist in the program evaluation process, provide organizational support, assist in meetings and conferences, and form relationships with March of Dimes staff members.

I was able to help wrap up final evaluations to submit at the end of grant periods, and I will be continuing to work for March of Dimes as an intern at Woman’s Hospital of Texas in their Antepartum Support program.

As a preemie myself, I have been greatly impressed by the work that March of Dimes is doing, and I have been greatly inspired to work in the field of maternal and child health.

Public Health Significance

March of Dimes performs all of the essential services of public health, minus the enforcement of laws. March of Dimes is instrumental in development and promotion of policies, mobilizing, empowering, and educating the community, as well as evaluating programs and conducting research.

I would say that the essential service that most closely relates to the work I was conducting at March of Dimes would be number 9: to evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.

For example, I spent a great amount of time entering pre-test and post-test data collected from Comenzando Bien participants, in order to submit the information for program analysis.

Through direct involvement in the program evaluation process, I was able to gain a greater understanding of what successful evaluation entails, what is effective, what can be changed, and best practices for evaluation in health promotion.

“Working with people who are passionate about what they do and the people they serve makes going to work each day a joy.”

Working together for stronger, healthier babies
Additionally, I was able to gain hands-on experience in Liberty County. In efforts to push for an evidence-based, sexual education program in Liberty Independent School District, I worked with several key members in the community. This included presentations with school stakeholders, along with the local School Health Advisory Council to build interests.

As my final product, I will be providing DSHS with a teen pregnancy tool-kit to be generalized and/or replicated for other communities.

Public Health Significance

In essence, I monitored health statuses to identify and solve community health problems—I was able to take teen pregnancy and frame the issue to seven rural counties and provide feasible solutions. For Liberty County specifically, I informed, educated, and empowered community members about this issue. Teenage pregnancy has been a major epidemic in the United States for many decades and ultimately affects billions of people directly and indirectly. This topic is a significant public health issue because they have exponential consequences both psychologically and physically. Because having evidence-based, abstinence-plus sexual education in schools decrease risky behaviors and increase safer choices, this practicum allowed me to tackled this issue at full force.
Talk for life after breast cancer

Psychosocial telephone intervention to improve quality of life for Chinese breast cancer survivors

By: Keiko Yamauchi

My practicum project was a literature review of psychosocial telephone intervention to improve quality of life for breast cancer survivors, and provide scientific information to create one for Chinese survivors.

Asian survivors in general do not participate in any survivorship programs. This is primarily because of language barrier, and culturally sensitive program is needed to reach them.

Dr. Lu, assistant professor and director of the Culture and Health Research Center at the University of Houston, helped the Chinese community in California to initiate face to face survivorship program which specifically designed for the Chinese survivors. The program was completed with success and they are recruiting third participants. In addition to the ongoing face to face program, the community wants to set up telephone counseling program to help women who are not able to commute to the community center.

Special events/ duties/highlights during your practicum

- Reviewed 30 original articles published in scientific journals
- Presented the results of literature review at the weekly research meeting
- Learned how Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) is built

Public Health Significance

The public health significance of this project is to reach underserved population.

Since life after cancer treatment is substantially prolonged for breast cancer, assisting survivors’ emotional and social well-being as well as physical health is growing public health challenge, especially for survivors who have limited transportation. The telephone intervention can link those survivors to the service they need.

Among breast cancer survivors, Chinese survivors are underserved because of language barrier. Culturally sensitive intervention developed in accordance with their needs including language preference would be effectively implemented among Chinese survivors.

I engaged in the early stage of the program; selecting intervention methods and practical strategies. The public health significant for this is a research for innovative solutions to health problems.

“Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.”

Winston Churchill.

Spring 2011 • Keiko Yamauchi • Dep. of Phycology, Univ. of Houston • Breast Cancer Survivorship
TEX PLATE: Eat Between the Lines.....

TEX PLATE: A FREE PORTION CONTROL INITIATIVE FOR RESTAURANTS

By: Ann Mary Abraham

Today more than ever Americans are eating out; take away and fast foods have become the rage.

TEX PLATE is a free portion control initiative for restaurants.

I was involved with the Tex Plate Team at the TX Department of State Health Services, in the initialization of the project at Waller County, Texas.

PUBLIC HEALTH SIGNIFICANCE

64% of Texans are overweight or obese, There are a number of factors that contribute to this obesity epidemic and eating large portion sizes when dining out is a key factor...people eat excess of calories and gain weight.

TEX PLATE addresses this issue by providing restaurants an opportunity to provide healthy food options thereby promoting healthy eating habits.

TEX PLATE is one of the Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention Programs DSHS has launched to combat the obesity epidemic.

My assignment involved

- Preparing a Literature Review
- Preparing a Phone book for Waller
- Developing a Project Plan
- Contacting key stakeholders in Waller and building a coalition focusing initially on Tex Plate and then on other nutrition/physical activity initiatives in Waller.

The DSHS is involved in monitoring the health status of counties in Texas and identifying health problems since Waller has a higher rate of obesity the TEX PLATE project will be initiated in Waller.

The main Public Health Essential Service used was that of mobilizing community partners and building a coalition to focus on implementation and evaluation of Tex Plate.

With successful implementation of Tex plate, we hope to provide Waller residents with healthy food options that are consistent with dietary guidelines and help improve the health status of Waller County.

Duties during my practicum

- Review of Literature
- Program Planning and initialization of TEX PLATE
- Coalition building engaging key stakeholders

Go lean with Protein. Make half your grains whole. Vary your veggies. Eat healthy stay healthy...

TEX PLATE

HEALTHY PORTIONS


TEX PLATE: Eat Between the Lines.....
ENSURING THAT ALL TEXAS CHILDREN ARE INSURED

By: TITILOLA BALOGUN

My work involved helping to make health care – Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Children’s Medicaid more accessible to thousands of eligible uninsured children in Texas.

My host organization Children’s Defense Fund Texas approached this issue by getting Texas Legislators in the 82nd legislative session to hear stories from children and their families whose health will be negatively impacted if these programs become under funded.

I was involved with collecting compelling stories from families whose children were dependent on CHIP and Children’s Medicaid.

I also participated in organizing over 200 advocates from all over the State of Texas to speak with their Legislators at the Capitol in Austin.

Public Health Significance

The Public Health Essential Services related to my experience are:

- Monitoring health status to identify community health problems
- Informing, educating, and empowering people about health issues
- Mobilizing community partnerships to identify and solve health problems
- Developing policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts

Children’s Defense Fund also:

- Organizes community outreaches to seek out uninsured children
- Organizes Freedom Schools to encourage positive attitudes towards learning
- Provides college scholarships to students who overcame adversity to achieve academic excellence

“Children everywhere need a voice. Who will speak for them?”

Special events during my practicum

- Getting to meet with Texas Legislators and participate in policy development
- Being a part of ‘Advocacy Day’ when advocates from all over Texas converged on the Capitol
Public Health Significance

Public health is a field that strives to raise the health status of a population by addressing societal needs. One of the essential services of public health as developed by the Core Public Health Functions Steering Committee highlights “informing, educating, and empowering people about health issues” as a responsibility of a local public health system. Community Health Workers are fundamental components to tackling this task as they are instrumental in acting as a resource for their communities, facilitating various interventions to enhance health outcomes, and improving equitable access to health care and MDG outcomes.

The Baylor Shoulder to Shoulder Foundation addresses this necessity with their support for Community Health Worker volunteers in the villages served by the BSTS clinic. As a primarily medical brigade, physicians are restricted to the limited amount of time they are present to treat patients. With only one local physician in the area, these CHW volunteers act as liaisons between the physician and surrounding villages. Without these volunteers, many underserved communities would not receive attention they need.

Community Health Collaboration

Bridging Medicine and Public Health through Community Health Worker Training in Rural Honduras

By: AMANDA DAVÉ

Community health workers are the sustainable link to healthy societies by serving as a bridge between healthcare providers and communities by addressing public health issues and positively impacting social determinants of health. In the remote, rural village of Santa Ana Intibuca, Honduras and surrounding areas, access to health care is limited, thus, volunteers from within the communities give up their time to learn how they can help promote health in their areas.

Twice a year, the Baylor Shoulder to Shoulder Foundation sends brigades of medical students to this area to provide medical care and support public health efforts initiated by the local doctor. As a practicum student with BSTS, I have had the opportunity to act as a liaison between public health students and medical students to organize and execute two Community Health Worker training sessions for volunteers from Santa Ana Intibuca and surrounding areas during the brigade. The training sessions allowed the brigade to provide an important service by helping the communities to take ownership over their own health, the health of their families, and the wellbeing of their society as a whole.

I have continued to serve as a liaison between the brigade participants and community health efforts in the area BSTS serves, assisting in carving a path towards a sustained community health worker program and continued relationship with the University Of Texas School Of Public Health.

“These often unsung heroes understand...that poverty, disease and famine are just as deadly and destructive as earthquakes, hurricanes and tsunamis. Individuals...are taking on these challenges in their communities, volunteering to make a difference. They remain the true champions of our work towards the Millennium Development Goals.”

- Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the UN

Medical and Public Health students of the BSTS brigade organizing a Community Health Worker training day after a long day of clinic work. – November 2011
What can WE do?

Human Trafficking in Houston! What can WE do?
By: Atena Majd, MPH

Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition, in conjunction with Shared Hope International, are collaborating on identifying domestic minor sex trafficking victims. This field assessment is extremely important for the City of Houston and Harris County because being familiar with the problem can better develop solutions for the future. I am beyond grateful for having the opportunity to be the co-author of the field assessment along Coalition Manager, Kendra Penry for Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition (HRRC). Our goal is to present findings from Houston and Harris County on domestic minor sex trafficking in an extensive report by the end of July 2011.

Public Health Significance

Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition provides a unique standard for non-profit work that informs, educates, and empowers community members on the topic of human rights, human trafficking and health outcomes. In addition, as a non-profit organization HRRC works closely with community stakeholders to develop policies and plans that are aimed to support communities on an individual and population health level. The field assessment project serves as a new perspective that will aid the federal government, legal entities, community organizations and other stakeholders with new insight and solution strategies to health problems associated with domestic minor sex trafficking in Houston and Harris County. Furthermore, the empirical data will assist in proper mobilization of resources and development of funding initiatives.

Say NO to the commercial sex industry
Support Texas and local anti-trafficking laws
Buy fair trade
Support business and education programs for young girls, young boys, and women
Understand the difference between human trafficking, smuggling, sex trafficking, and labor trafficking
Report suspected human trafficking to the Department of Health and Human Services Human Trafficking

“Each year, 800,000 people become human trafficking victims and are transported across international borders, 20 percent of those people pass through Texas”.

Texas Attorney General

Spring 2011 ● Atena Majd ● Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition● Field Assessment

Get Moving City of Houston Farmers’ Markets

By: Michelle Marshall

I was able to take part in the start-up of Get Moving Houston Farmers’ Markets. We held meetings with stakeholders at the local community centers. Also monthly Farmers’ Markets were held at the community centers in Sunnyside, Fifth Ward, and Magnolia. These locations have been designated as “food deserts”.

The purpose of the Markets is to make fresh fruits and vegetables available at reasonable prices to low income areas that did not have prior access.

By creating these markets local farmers and home growers are given access to the public where they can sell they produce and the public is able to purchase at a reduced price.

I was able to contribute by not only participating in stakeholder meetings and the actual Markets, but I also wrote the rules and regulations for the Markets.

Public Health Significance

The City of Houston’s, Get Moving Houston Farmers’ Markets, mostly focused on the Policy Development aspect of Public Health.

They brought information and empowerment through community gardens, awareness of the problem of “food deserts” in Houston, and education at the markets about proper eating habits.

Secondly, the mobilization of community stakeholders was amazing.

People from all areas including, farmers vendors, and other local farmer markets came together to create and support the Get Moving Houston Farmers’ Markets

Since this was a start-up program many policies were developed in the process to assure the success and quality of the Farmers’ Markets.

“... for the Farmers’ Markets

Spring 2011 ● Michelle Marshall ● City of Houston’s Health Department● Farmers’ Markets

Special events/ duties

• Participating in stakeholder meetings
• Taking part in the Farmers’ Markets with local people, farmers, and vendors
• Writing the rules and regulations for the Farmers’ Markets

“... you tell me how can I do that when there is no healthy food here.”

Cooking Lessons at the Market with a local farmer.
Human Trafficking

Training Healthcare Providers to Identify Victims

By: Rachel McMillen

Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition is an organization that works to educate and provide awareness on human trafficking for both the public and professionals. HRRC developed a training with a previous intern on educating healthcare professionals on identifying human trafficking victims. The current training is an in-person, classroom environment and lasts 2 to 3 hours. As an intern at HRRC, I worked with my site preceptors on developing the training into a web-based training format. This will allow for more health professionals to have the time to take the training, as well as allow professionals from other cities to take it as well. During my practicum, I developed a storyboard of the training. A storyboard is a written out description of what the training will look like. It is detailed and depicts each item on the slide and what it does. The storyboard will be what a web designer will use to launch the training.

Important Events:
- Attended multiple trainings with both Planned Parenthood and the Texas Public Health Association
- Conference call to collaborate with other professionals in creating the web-based training.

Public Health Significance

Public health professionals are key stakeholders in fighting against human trafficking. My practicum experience has allowed me to fulfill many of the essential services of the field of public health. One of these essential services is informing, educating and empowering people about health issues. The training is working towards educating all healthcare professionals on the proper identification of a human trafficking victim and what steps to take next. Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition also provides other trainings for different types of professionals including CPS caseworkers, 911 telephone operators, and they also hold trainings for the general public. Along with these trainings, HRRC provides awareness of human trafficking through various events for the public. These trainings also work to assure a competent public health and personal healthcare workforce. In the web-based training, this is done by participating in case studies. These case studies allow the professional to practice what they have learned and apply it to their own clinic or situation.

The web-based training will allow for an even more competent health professional workforce by providing more opportunity for others to participate. Professionals will be able to participate from their own homes and go through it at their own pace. This type of training will create more awareness of the issue of human trafficking and can aid in identifying and helping more victims.

Spring 2010 • Rachel McMillen • Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition • Human Trafficking

“28% of human trafficking victims came into contact with the health care system while in captivity but were not identified”
(Family Violence Prevention and World Childhood Foundation, 2005)

Source: http://humangoods.net/?page_id=1343

Public Health Significance

Human trafficking is an invisible crime, which makes it harder for victims to be identified. This training is important in educating providers on looking beneath the surface to see what is really there.

Source: http://humangoods.net/?page_id=1343
I compiled a list of best practices for detecting domestic/intimate partner violence (D/IPV) during HIV program activities. I examined various studies and practice guidelines in the literature, reviewed websites of various Houston-area agencies, and spoke to several agencies. In examining these three data sources, I wanted to compile a list of best practices that were empirically based yet culturally relevant to the greater Houston area, especially the diverse groups that are affected by D/IPV such as MSM’s and transgender individuals.

Acting as a primary resource, my host organization facilitated access to Houston-area HIV agencies and provided feedback on my final product: a formal presentation at the quarterly contractors’ meeting.

While detection of D/IPV may be directly assessed with questions on risk assessment forms, agencies may consider a comprehensive approach that would not only encourage victims to come forth, but also enable agencies to measure the effectiveness of their efforts.

This approach involves the Public Health Essential Services of monitoring health, diagnosing and investigating, developing policies, linking to and providing care, assuring a competent workforce, and evaluation.

A few recommendations from my project include:

- D/IPV assessment questions on intake forms
- An environment of trust and security that would encourage victims to disclose
- Benchmarks to assess detection efforts
- Workforce training in D/IPV detection

Evidence suggests that fear of and experience with violence play a significant role in women’s decisions regarding both HIV status disclosure to sexual partners and their ability to adopt HIV risk reduction strategies” (World Health Organization, 2006).
Healthcare Workers and Vaccinations

Exploring factors that determine non-compliance with influenza vaccination among healthcare workers.

By: Chidi Obinani

While working on another project I accidentally saw some influenza vaccination declination forms. I was surprised by some of the reasons healthcare workers gave as to why they are refusing the Influenza vaccination.

Some of the reasons given are:
- It makes me sick
- I’ll get the flu anyway
- I don't think the vaccine is safe.
- I don’t get sick

I decided to explore this issue further and I’m seriously considering doing my dissertation on this topic. I’m currently doing a systematic literature review to ascertain if my intended topic has already been addressed in the literature.

Public Health Significance

The Public Health Essential Services (PHES) that most closely relates my practicum experience are:
- Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health effort.

During my practicum I helped the organization review and update their infection control risk assessment policy by inculcating goals and the plans to achieve those goals. The updates will help the organization better track infectious diseases and be able to control them through preventative modalities.

- Research for new insight and innovative solutions to health problems

My intended research study on exploring factors that determine non compliance to influenza vaccination among healthcare workers will provide new insight and help in finding innovative solution to the problem of healthcare workers non compliance with influenza vaccination.

Highlights

- Helped the organization prepare for JCAHCO inspection
- Reviewing and updating infection control risk assessment policy for the organization

“If healthcare workers practice what they preach, the issue of influenza vaccination will be a non issue.”

Help stop the spread of flu virus, get vaccinated.
A Growing Hope

The Power of Compassion

- One-on-one interaction with volunteers who have devoted countless hours
- Developed greater realization of the need for improving healthcare across the world
- Acquired better sense of marketing skills within the healthcare arena

“Applying this kind of simple solution to such a massive global program is truly ingenious, both environmentally and ethically.”

Marketing For a Greater Cause

By: Reena Patel

Becoming a part of a marketing team in healthcare opened my eyes to another world of ‘promoting’. Working to rebrand a nonprofit organization’s image is quite distinctive regarding the approaches taken.

Interviewing individuals involved on varying levels for Medical Bridges provides the opportunity to obtain unique perspectives for creating the final products: a ‘rejuvenated’ website and brochure.

The team worked to create a greater awareness of Medical Bridges services: to help increase donations and medical supplies.

We obtained feedback from those involved inside and outside the organization on both a personal and professional level which then allowed the team to create the final products in hopes of producing an influential and emotional aspect towards the organization's efforts.

Contributions to Public Health

Public Health Essential Services that define Medical Bridges include: Researching for new insights, mobilizing community partnerships, and most importantly, linking individuals to personal health services.

Medical Bridges contribution to public health is to help create a connection between those ‘who have’ and those ‘who need’.

Donating medical equipment and supplies to countries in need is a significant step in the right direction to improving worldwide access to proper health services. This translates to millions of dollars worth of supplies donated to save lives rather than wasted and disposed of.

The efforts from the numerous donations have contributed to over 80 countries on 5 continents. This in itself exemplified how collective forces can make such dramatic differences in saving lives.

Source: http://www.free-extras.com/images/holding_hands-1418.htm

Source: http://joshidaniel.com/category/black-and-white/
Organizing of an International NGO

By: Nicole Poole

As a practicum student for Safe Mothers, Safe Babies, my duties and goals surrounded the management and organization of an international public health intervention. SAFE is an organization which works towards improving maternal and infant health in Uganda. I worked on preparing the seven students who will be interning in Uganda this summer for their trip abroad.

Part of preparing students for an international experience is to build their leadership skills and educate them on the cultural differences they will encounter.

I prepared a pre-departure packet for each student, which included references to leadership styles. I also researched and began writing a grant to secure financial resources for the organization.

Public Health Significance

This practicum experience involved two essential services of public health.

First, I worked to assure a confident and competent public health workforce to implement our project in Uganda. This process has involved educating, inspiring, and training the students who will be traveling abroad. Additionally, encouraging their contributions and working collaboratively will lead to a more successful internship for both the students and the community of Iganga.

Second, I have used research skills in this practicum to investigate both effective culturally sensitive community practices and also to find resources from which to work with.

This summer, the students will work with a women’s group to mobilize their role in the community. As an organization, SAFE empowers communities to take ownership of their health and work towards improving the lives of their women and children.
The Value Proposition

The Soft Tissues Sarcoma Value Proposition Project

By: Lindsay Roach

My practicum took place at The Institute for Cancer Care Excellence, a department of The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. This project focused on evaluating disease specific clinical outcomes to understand the value of administering multidisciplinary cancer care for soft tissue sarcoma patients. The project is based on evaluating the “Value Proposition” in health care, which focuses on shifting the focus of health care on value, which can lower costs and improve quality. The project involved abstracting clinical data for various patient centered metrics for sarcoma patients who were treated at MD Anderson. As the colead on this project, I supervised the data abstraction process and collaborated with the principal investigator. The final product will determine the true value and cost of cancer care for sarcoma patients.

Public Health Significance

This practicum focused on the two Essential Public Health services of Evaluation and Research.

For this retrospective study, the entire cancer treatment process for soft tissue sarcoma patients aims to be evaluated on its effectiveness, costs, and value to the patients.

In addition, research conducted through patient records will eventually determine the impact of evidence-based guideline adherence on disease specific clinical outcomes.

An example of the evaluation as an essential public health service in this practicum is the evaluation process for the disease site.

Information is collected by data abstractors and transferred into databases, to determine clinical outcomes that are most important to the patient during cancer treatment, such as whether a patient experienced a relapse, and how this was treated, or whether a patient needed an amputation of some sort. This project is the first step in creating valuable and cost efficient cancer treatment processes.

Highlights

- Gained important knowledge from meetings with physicians, managers, and administrators at MD Anderson
- Worked at the #1 ranked cancer hospital in the country

“The way to transform health care is to realign competition with value for patients.”

-Michael Porter, Redefining Health Care

Spring 2011 ● Lindsay Roach ● Institute for Cancer Care Excellence ● The Value Proposition: Soft Tissue Sarcoma
Public Health Significance

Methodist International (MI) contributes significantly to Public Health internationally. The Essential Services of Public Health that are central to the work of Methodist International are the services of mobilization and evaluation. MI collaborates with community partnerships as consultants and managers of healthcare to help identify and solve health problems. Additionally, through consulting and management projects, MI evaluates healthcare systems to help improve and develop more effective, accessible and quality healthcare organizations.

Currently, MI has a collaborative project to develop Women’s Health and Cardiovascular Centers from the ground up that would then be built all over the world. Additionally, MI has another project that consists of the evaluation and subsequent improvement of nursing practices and training in a foreign healthcare system.
The CATCH Middle School Project: Preventing Chronic Diseases in Young Adolescents

By: WHITNEY HAMMER

For my practicum, I worked in conjunction with the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living and the Department of Health Education at UT Austin. My project began in the Fall of 2010 creating observation forms for CATCH Middle School. I created forms for both 7th and 8th grade lessons. After doing so, I participated in several classroom observations to learn more about CATCH and how it’s implemented in both the academic setting and during PE classes.

Public Health Significance

CATCH Middle School is a program which promotes physical activity and healthy food choices through a series of classroom lessons, PE activities, and home lessons. It “informs, educates, and empowers people about health issues”.

While I was not directly teaching any of the lessons, or distributing any of the learning materials, I feel that my “behind the scenes” work will contribute to future improvements to the project.

The classroom observations will show how the material is being presented and if it’s being done so properly and effectively. The responses from the teacher surveys will allow changes to be made to the classroom lessons and the activity breaks. Both will help the program’s designers to know what information is helpful, and what needs improvement.

The Michael and Susan Dell Center for Health Living and Department of Health Education at UT Austin are extremely dedicated informing, educating and empowering on health issues through prevention efforts. They both function on the principle that the adaptation of a healthy lifestyle early in life will prevent or reduce chronic diseases in the future.

In the spring, I switched my focus to the teacher surveys which were set to be distributed to all of our target schools in central Texas to gauge how and if teachers were using the CATCH lessons and activity breaks in their classrooms. I created an online version of the survey for the more “technologically advanced” schools, and prepared copies of the paper survey for the rest. After collection, I created a fully-functional Access database to store records; and input each record myself (over 1000 records!). This database, along with the very rough analysis I conducted, were the final product for the practicum.

Practicum Duties

- Create observation forms for CATCH Middle School lessons
- Observe CATCH Middle School lessons
- Distribute CATCH Middle School Teacher Surveys
- Create an Access database to store Teacher Survey responses
- Input and analyze data for the Teacher Survey

“Medical science has proven time and again that when the resources are provided, great progress in the treatment, cure, and prevention of disease can occur.”
- Michael J. Fox

Spring 2011 • Whitney Hammer • Austin Regional Campus • Prevention Research in Youth
CATCH Youth Activism

Promoting Youth Leadership to Promote Healthy Living

By: Kyle Claude Jahnke

The CATCH Program works within schools around Austin to promote healthy living by increasing physical activity and decreasing sugar and fatty food consumption with goals of decreasing obesity.

Health promotion such as “Get your 60” and “Get your H2O” are found in schools with a CATCH presence.

This practicum focused on the continuation of the CATCH objectives through a different mode- youth activism. In short, utilizing leadership skills to empower school’s youth to promote healthy living.

Instilling an in-school program dedicated to both youth leadership skills and healthy living education was the focus of this internship. The final product: A manual describing how to set up this program in a CATCH school.

Public Health Significance

This specific practicum was fit to inform, educate and empower- one of the ten Public Health Essential Services.

Manuals and outlines were written for program leaders to educate students on leadership skills (communication, trust, etc.) as well as healthy living techniques. The combination of the two disciplines give students within the program the ability to creatively find ways to promote healthy living using the learned leadership skills.

The pilot version of the leadership training sessions were run at a Del Valle middle school in a Leadership elective class during school. The end goal of this practicum is to form a part of the CATCH manual that will help with the decrease of obesity among youth.

This new approach to school health proves to be hopeful to benefitting CATCH and its analogs.

Wednesday Pilot Class

- Work directly with students in classroom setting
- Led fun active games teaching ways to lead peers in school
- Promoted healthy living through CATCH lessons and activities.

“Utilizing leadership skills to empower school’s youth to promote healthy living.”
Health Information Technology

The U.S. Health Care System's Adoption of Health Information Technology by Jeannie Ricketts

The failure of the U.S. health care system to adopt health information technology ("HIT") is referred to in economics as a "market failure." Health information technology includes electronic health records, electronic prescribing, remote disease monitoring and personal health records. To encourage the adoption of HIT, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ("ARRA") contained Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health ("HITECH") provisions intended to stimulate the adoption of HIT.

HITECH is promoting the "meaningful use" of HIT. A majority of states are now working toward implementing HIT.

In Texas, the Health and Human Services Commission ("HHSC") is helping doctors and health care providers sign up for new incentive payments for using electronic health records in a meaningful way. Providers can begin the program now, and the first payments are expected in May 2011.

Medical Loss Ratio Rule

HIT will increase the transparency of the payment for and provision of health care, which will benefit health care consumers.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services promulgated a medical loss ratio rule based upon statutory authority from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("PPACA"). The new rule includes HIT as an acceptable cost associated with quality assurance to encourage insurers to spend money on HIT without it constituting an administrative cost, as long as the HIT improves health quality. The rationale behind the medical loss ratio rule is to discourage insurers from spending too much of their premium dollars on marketing, salaries, underwriting, claims processing and other administrative expenses. The insurance industry benchmark is that insurers should spend 85 cents of every premium dollar on medical costs.

The PPACA provisions related to HIT may help bolster HIT implementation efforts.

"We're trying to go to electronic records and we have the capabilities now to do this. This is the modern age, I guess, of computer technology where you have those privileges. I can do it from my home even." – Excerpt of deposition testimony of Dr. Albert J. Kolibash in Johnson v. Hillcrest, 70 P.3d 811, 815-16 (Okla. 2003)

The potential legal liability associated with HIT is relatively unknown. With providers' increasing use of HIT and electronic health records, they will face new aspects of potential liability.
GLOBAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To me, LIVESTRONG Means Engaging the World to Fight Cancer

By: Betsy Trevarthen

While at LIVESTRONG, I worked with the Community and Global Mission departments. I had two mentors and two focuses.

For Community, I worked on grants data entry to the database management system. Furthermore, I conducted outreach to organizations for a national campaign, recruiting student organizations to apply for a $10,000 grant. I also entered survey data into a database to be used in a national report for community engagement.

On the Global side, I edited the LIVESTRONG Community toolkit and tailored the best practices for international organizations’ growth and development.

The final product for my internship will be the Global Toolkit, which will be a resource for global engagement.

Public Health Significance

My work at LIVESTRONG was in accordance with two areas of Public Health Significance: Engagement and Research.

For Engagement, I specifically worked to create a toolkit that would enable international organizations to engage more with LIVESTRONG from overseas. LIVESTRONG strives to provide avenues of engagement for the cancer community.

During my internship, I conducted research to understand how to create best practices for international organizations as they grow in their communities. I also researched domestic community organizations for outreach, and to identify where gaps in cancer outreach exist in the United States. LIVESTRONG is constantly doing research to identify gaps in resources in the cancer community. LIVESTRONG strives to provide the best and most up-to-date resources to their constituents.

Special events/ duties during your practicum

- Grant information entry into database management
- Outreach to community organizations
- Develop a survey

Commitment Makers
to measure global engagement.

STRENGTHEN
EMPOWERMENT BY
INCREASING
ENGAGEMENT
~LIVESTRONG

Unity is Strength,
Knowledge is Power.
Attitude is Everything.

~LIVESTRONG Manifesto
Web PHA and Readiness Metrics

Web Preventive Health Assessment and USAF Readiness Metrics

By: Johnnie Foster

Air Force Medical Operations and Support Agencies oversee execution of the Air Force Surgeon General policies and programs, supporting Air Force expeditionary capabilities, health care operations and national security strategies. The agencies provide expert consultative leadership for the entire medical service supporting the activities of 42,000 personnel and 75 medical treatment facilities with a $6.4 billion budget, ensuring a cost-effective, modern and prevention-based health care continuum for 2.6 million beneficiaries worldwide.

My practicum was focused in the Healthcare Informatics Division, where I evaluated the Web Health Assessment question set and responses, how the data was collected and processed for use, and how the data was assessed to improve the application and utilization of the health assessment. The overarching goal was to improve the health of the AF community, ensuring the “ready to deploy or respond” status. Due to the current high-operations tempo, areas of interest included metrics on tobacco use, physical fitness, obesity, nutrition, and mental health.

Public Health Significance

Monitor • Diagnose and Investigate • Inform, Educate and Empower • Develop Policies and Plans • Link • Assure • Evaluate • Research

- Monitoring tool for health problems, hazards, and trends in Airmen
- Diagnose and investigate conditions, diseases, and trends for intervention
- Inform, educate, and empower the individual and chain of command to remain in fit-to-fight state
- Develop policies and plans proactively as a predictive tool or reactively to reverse poor health outcome trends
- Link medical providers to critically or priority-flagged responses and referral agencies for further evaluation
- Assure competent public health and healthcare workforce
- Evaluate effectiveness and quality of web health assessment and identified medical needs
- Research for new screening and medical treatment processes, focusing on prevention

USAF State of Readiness

- Airmen are in a continuous state of readiness.
- When you become a member of the Air Force, you make a commitment to protect, honor and serve your country.
- That commitment includes the possibility of deployment at a moment’s notice.
- Are you ready?

“Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men. It is the spirit of the men who follow and of the man who leads that gains the victory.”

George S. Patton
Cavalry Journal
(September 1933)
Public Health Significance

The goal of the program is to intervene early and remove much of the uncertainty surrounding the nature, act and consequences of sex. This primary prevention program encourages student interaction, both vocally and through activities.

Proper condom use is a cheap and very effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. At one of the community gatherings, we educated all of the students on how to properly put on a condom. We made time at the end of the presentation for each student to practice putting on a condom from opening the wrapper to placing it onto our model wooden penises. This served as a great learning tool because we found that over 75% of students did not know how to properly put on a condom.

Myself and others involved in the program hope that by empowering Lubbock teenagers through education on sexually transmitted infections and contraception use, the infection and pregnancy rates will decline in Lubbock.

Teen Straight Talk

This past semester I taught sex education to Lubbock teenagers at high schools, detention centers and community gatherings. As an instructor and curriculum developer, I covered material including sexually transmitted infections (STIs), contraception and social pressures.

Lubbock, Texas ranks among the country leaders in STIs and teen pregnancy rates. With Lubbock ISD approval, the Big Decisions presentation was developed to connect more effectively with a younger audience and included younger instructors, more pictures and an updated vocabulary.

The main goal this semester was to expand the reach of the program. Accordingly, the program taught its first classes to teenagers in a juvenile detention center. Currently, we are in discussions with teachers to cover the last remaining high school in Lubbock yet to receive the program.

“Incan you get an STD from a toilet seat?”

When it comes to educating teens about sex there is a lot of misinformation that is passed around by students that think they know what they are talking about.

http://universityhealth.wordpress.com/2011/02/25/condom-competition/

Instructor at Teen Straight Talk

- Learning as much about contraception as I taught
- My favorite part of the presentation was when students would ask questions.

Spring 2010 ● Brock Hewitt ● Lubbock, TX ● Sexual Education
Public Health Significance

The AFMSA Healthcare Informatics Division and AFMOA provide numerous examples of the Essential Services of Public Health.

The WebHA is an annual assessment of USAF active duty overall health, mental health, physical fitness, nutrition, tobacco use, and dental health. This program monitors individual and higher level health status and health hazards. It provides immediate feedback to individuals and identifies areas that need AF wide education and empowerment.

Implementation of USAF policy requires involvement and support from the line of the USAF. New USAF policy developed to comply with new NDAA legislation regarding the mental health readiness of deploying airmen went into effect during my Practicum.

AFMOA has staff dedicated to enacting and monitoring policies to ensure all USAF beneficiaries have access to appropriate medical care.

Evaluation of how well individuals and population-based health services succeed is a major reason why the Health Informatics Division exists.

Furthermore, my presence at my site as an MPH student and Aerospace Medicine Resident is an example of how the USAF ensures a competent public health and personal healthcare workforce.
Applying Public Health

Public Health Applied in a Hospital Setting

By: Ashley Valla

This semester I reviewed how public health is applied in a hospital setting. I looked at the different areas of emergency preparedness, infection control, statistics, and community programs.

Each area has regular monthly meetings to discuss ways to improve their services to the community and their customers.

Emergency Preparedness recreates disaster drills in order to learn how to respond in a real emergency. It also allows for the hospital to be sure they have the proper required materials and training before a real disaster strikes.

Public Health Significance

Christus Santa Rosa provides many community programs, in particular the Center for Miracles, which provides medical care for abused children.

http://www.centerformiracles.org/index.html

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Christus Santa Rosa provides many community programs such as the Center for Miracles, Mobile Mammogram, and Mobile Clinics.

Highlights

• Visiting the Center for Miracles for abused children
• Witnessing a disaster drill for contaminated individuals

Christus Santa Rosa is the only Catholic faith-based, non-profit health care system in San Antonio and New Braunfels.

http://christussantarosa.com/body.cfm?id=50&fr=true

“Christus Santa Rosa is your health care home for life.”
I worked as an intern at the San Antonio Metro Health Department’s Communicable Disease Program. I mainly worked in the STD/HIV and TB clinics. I helped in compiling data for their year-end reports, data entry, basic data analysis, and creating databases and spreadsheets.

I worked with mainly issues in the TB and STD/HIV clinics such as reporting new cases and treating people (already reported cases).

The clinics did contact investigations for new cases and already reported cases as well as giving treatment either from the clinic or out in the field.

Duties: Data entry, data analysis, creating spreadsheets and databases

- TB clinic: observing DOT out in the field
- STD/HIV clinic: observing DIS field work

Public Health Significance

Monitor-Evaluate and Diagnose-Inform, Educate, and Empower-Enforce-Link

The TB clinic is responsible in monitoring TB cases in Bexar County and informing and educating the public. I was able to help them with the data entry for those cases as well as being able to sit in on interviews with TB patients and observe DOT out in the field. The STD/HIV clinic does the same duties as the TB clinics, but with STD/HIV cases. If there are contagious patients that are refusing treatments, the TB clinic can enforce the law in where the patients are sent to isolation (TCID). I was also to participate in a large contact investigation of a TB case class 3. The large contact investigation gathered potential contacts, but also we went out into the field and informed the public about TB.

“People are more open with information when being questioned about TB rather than STD/HIV questions.”

Poster advertising getting tested for STDs
http://www.stdhivtraining.org/swap_feature.html
For more information regarding
The University of Texas School of Public Health,
Office of Public Health Practice
and the practicum program, please visit:
http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/academics/practicum/