

DISEASE INVESTIGATION AND CONTROL SPECIALIST I/II

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, conducts disease surveillance, investigation, and control activities; provides health education on disease prevention and control; provides professional training addressing disease reporting, investigation, documentation, and control; maintains current knowledge of infectious and communicable diseases sufficient to conduct professional interaction with healthcare providers and the general public; performs related work as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Disease Investigation and Control Specialist I is the entry-level class of the disease investigator series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents learn to plan and conduct health education and training relative to disease prevention, control, and reporting, as well as to conduct disease surveillance, investigation, and control activities associated with infectious and communicable diseases. This classification is alternatively staffed with Disease Investigation and Control Specialist II and incumbents may advance to the higher level after gaining experience and demonstrating proficiency to meet the qualifications of the higher level class.

Disease Investigation and Control Specialist II is the journey level of the series, fully competent and expected to perform the full range of duties of the position. Incumbents are expected to make sound recommendations for effective prevention and control activities. Incumbents at this level may be responsible for providing training, guidance, and oversight for staff at the entry level of this series, as well as for lower level support staff participating in communicable disease prevention, investigation and control activities. This class series works under direction of licensed medical staff overseeing or participating in disease investigation and control activities.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (Illustrative Only)

- Reviews incoming laboratory reports and confidential morbidity reports to determine if reported information is consistent with case definitions for reportable diseases.
- Contacts physicians or other providers to obtain or clarify information and confirm diagnoses of reportable diseases; consults regarding disease reporting requirements and processes.
- Documents reportable cases using appropriate computer applications.
- Solicits case information from healthcare providers or other entities using active surveillance techniques.
- Investigates assigned cases, under direction of licensed medical staff; works collaboratively with nurses, environmental health specialists, or other staff participating in investigations.
- Reviews medical treatment being received by case patients and advises supervisor or other licensed staff of evaluation and findings.
- Conducts interviews and contact tracing in conjunction with infectious and communicable disease investigations; provides identified contacts with appropriate disease prevention information, and refers as necessary for medical screening and treatment services.
- Recommends and initiates procedures for isolation/quarantine of case patients or contacts in order to limit the spread of infectious disease.
- Investigates reported outbreaks of illness, in coordination with environmental health or other regulatory or control agencies; participates in identification of cause and implementation of disease prevention and control measures.
- Provides oral briefings and prepares written reports on individual cases and communicable disease outbreaks.

- Attends and participates in communicable disease meetings.
- Plans, develops, and conducts education and training regarding disease prevention and control to schools, community groups, health partners, or other appropriate organizations.
- Conducts research using medical texts, internet resources, and subject matter experts, to remain current on various diseases and to prepare and deliver education/training to others.
- Develops measurable objectives prior to conducting education/training activities.
- Participates in preparedness training and response addressing bioterrorism or other public health threats and emergencies.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Risk factors, symptoms, communicability, transmission, diagnosis, and treatment of infectious diseases.
- Strategies/techniques for disease prevention and communicable disease control.
- Laws and regulations pertaining to surveillance, reporting, and control of infectious and communicable diseases, medical records (including privacy and security of protected health information), and other related public health matters.
- Methods and practices for conducting medical case investigations and disease outbreak investigations.
- Interviewing techniques for use with communicable disease case patients and contacts.
- Computer applications appropriate for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data.
- Proper English usage, including syntax, grammar, and punctuation.
- Basic supervisory principles/practices (Level II only).

Skill in:

- Collecting, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting on varied information and data, both in statistical and narrative form.
- Analyzing information and risk factors, evaluating alternatives, and reaching sound conclusions.
- Investigating potential cases of communicable disease and formulating recommendations for appropriate prevention and control action.
- Exercising sound independent judgment within established guidelines, particularly during disease investigation
- Making sound recommendations for effective prevention and control activities.
- Using computer hardware and software effectively in the performance of assigned work.
- Communicating both orally (including public speaking) and in writing (including preparing clear, concise, and complete correspondence, reports, and other documents).
- Maintaining accurate records and files.
- Demonstrating a professional demeanor in the course of all work.
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Other Requirements:

Must possess a valid driver's license. Must be available for call out and response to emergencies during off-duty hours when needed. Bilingual skills highly desirable.

Education and Experience:

Disease Investigation and Control Specialist I: Equivalent to an Associate's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in public health, epidemiology, social science, health education, biological sciences, or related fields, and at least one year of experience in disease investigation, preferably in a public health setting. Possession of a Bachelor's degree may be substituted for the required experience.

Disease Investigation and Control Specialist II: In addition to the above, two more years of disease investigation experience at a level equivalent to the County's Disease Investigation and Control Specialist I.

NOTE: The above qualifications are a typically accepted way of obtaining the required knowledge and skills.