



HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

Healthy People Living in Healthy Communities Throughout El Dorado County

Neda West, Director / Olivia C. Kasirye, MD, MS, Public Health Officer
931 Spring Street, Placerville, CA 95667 (530) 621-6156 / Fax (530) 626-4713

March 8, 2010

Public Health Apprentice Program
Office of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter has been prepared by the El Dorado County Health Services Department to announce our intention to apply to host a public health apprentice. El Dorado County is a rural county that is diverse in its geography, culture, and disease burden. The rural nature of the county coupled with its unique qualities offers an exciting and challenging learning environment for individuals working in the public health field. In the following paragraphs, we outline the program areas and scope of work for each year assignment.

Year One

Program Area: Other Communicable Disease – Hepatitis C

Focus Areas: Case Investigation, Disease Surveillance and Community Outreach

Background: Hepatitis C is the most common blood borne infection in El Dorado County, with a case rate of 97/100,000 in 2008. The hepatitis C burden in El Dorado County has been rising steadily since 1999; in 2009, there were 209 cases of hepatitis C reported to the Health Services Department compared to 180 in 2008. These cases are concentrated within specific geographic areas in the County.

Assignments:

Investigate all new cases of hepatitis C and research common transmission routes

- Assist in development of hepatitis C survey questionnaire.
- Assist in disease investigation and interviews of hepatitis C cases reported to Public Health.
- Assist in using geographic information systems to map reported hepatitis C cases, to identify disproportionately impacted communities.
- Research transmission routes among disproportionately impacted communities.
- Compile local epidemiological profile of hepatitis.

Develop health promotion and awareness strategies for educating the public and providers about hepatitis C

- Work with the local hepatitis C taskforce to identify community viral hepatitis resources and gaps for education, prevention, testing, vaccination, support, and care.
- Adapt and distribute education information and materials using a variety of media outlets to promote awareness about hepatitis C among the general public.

- Assist in developing and delivering in-person trainings on hepatitis C prevention and service integration to providers in El Dorado County including providers in HIV, alcohol and drug treatment, mental health, corrections, and other fields serving at-risk adults.

Year Two

Program Area: Public Health Preparedness

Focus Areas: Public Health Administration and Community Outreach/Health Promotion

Background: The goal of the Public Health Preparedness section is to prepare El Dorado County to effectively respond to public health threats by focusing on public health emergency planning, disease surveillance, detection and control, health risk communication, and public and health provider education and training. The Preparedness Team works closely with other public health programs to plan community events such as the annual drive-thru flu clinic and more recently, the H1N1 Pandemic Swine flu campaign. The Preparedness Team also works closely with several multi-agency taskforce groups that include representatives from the Office of Emergency Services, Fire Departments, Environmental Management Department, the two local hospitals, schools and local businesses to review preparedness plans and conduct exercises.

Assignments:

Review, Revise and Write Public Health Preparedness Plans

- Support the Public Health Preparedness Team with long-term preparedness planning.
- Engage community stakeholders and partners in the review and revision of existing preparedness plans.
- Collaborate and develop relationships with community and partner organizations relative to preparedness planning and response.
- Assist in the implementation of public health preparedness program activities and plans through training, drills and exercises.

Project Planning and Coordination

- Attend meetings and programs designed to expand knowledge and capability relative to public health preparedness programs.
- Recruit community partners to engage in preparedness planning efforts.
- Develop and conduct trainings related to public health preparedness to Department staff and community partners.
- Identify opportunities for promoting and marketing public health preparedness programs to community partners and stakeholders.
- Assist with the evaluation of public health preparedness education programs, materials, and trainings.

The Public Health Apprentice would work under the direct supervision of the County Health Officer and interact with various members of the Department and community members. We believe that this Apprenticeship will offer an excellent opportunity to gain broad experience in the operations of a local health department and provide preparation for a career in Public Health. We look forward to submitting a full application. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Neda West
Director, Department of Health Services