



Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

Job Description

Position ID Number:	920018005	Last Revised:	02/26/2018
Position Title:	PHHS Epidemiologist	Department:	Public Health
Reports to:	Public Health Director	Division:	Public Health and Human Services

Primary Function:

This employee will perform a wide range of epidemiologic tasks including but not limited to epidemiologic investigation; surveillance and monitoring; data and selected statistical analysis; recommendations on control measures, policies, procedures, and protocols; and production and communication of epidemiologic information to colleagues, Tribal and other government officials, and the public in the areas of communicable disease, chronic disease, injury, non-communicable conditions of public health interest, and other population health issues. The purpose of this position is to contribute to EBCI Public Health's mission to honor the Cherokee community by providing excellent service in epidemiological investigation and surveillance activities; promoting health through epidemiologic data acquisition, analysis, and promulgation; and serving families in a culturally respectful way through recommending appropriate policies and control measures, collaborating with partners, and educating stakeholders and the community.

Job Duties and Responsibilities:

Participates in epidemiologic investigations:

- Interact with internal and external customers / clients in a polite and professional manner.
- Participates in developing, conducting, reporting, and evaluating epidemiologic investigations, including but not limited to communicable disease, chronic disease, injury, and other public health conditions.
- Uses established scientific and technical methods and practices to identify and evaluate a wide range of health conditions within an assigned program area.
- Participates in onsite reviews of facilities and procedures; interviews of patients, health-care providers, and others involved; and data collection from Tribal, state, regional, national, or local agencies or other health entities.
- Performs analyses by using statistical techniques commonly employed in epidemiologic evaluations to interpret and analyze observed health phenomena.
- Uses, develops, and manages databases for analysis of public health-related issues.
- Uses surveillance systems to collect disease or health outcome data.
- Generates descriptive analyses of surveillance data for a variety of audiences.
- Provide data and information concerning corrective actions or interventions based on epidemiological findings.
- Participate in review and analysis of reports including achievements and areas for improvement.

Participates in surveillance activities:

- Identifies surveillance data needs, implements new or revises existing surveillance systems, reports key findings from the surveillance system, and supports evaluation of surveillance systems.
- Collaborates with Tribal Public Health-related surveillance activities Tribal-wide, and at

county, state, and regional levels.

Consults on scientific and technical issues:

- Provides scientific epidemiologic advice and technical assistance to various Tribal public, private, and nonprofit health and health-related agencies, programs, and organizations.
- Proposes epidemiology-related practices or policies based on findings that will preserve or promote public health in the EBCI community.

Presents, publishes, and disseminates data and epidemiologic findings:

- Conducts literature reviews and assists in preparing reports from analyses of primary and secondary, qualitative and quantitative data; literature reviews; and other information using behavioral science, demographic and epidemiologic analytic techniques, and evaluation.
- Uses established, audience-specific methods for data description in a variety of formats.
- Makes oral presentations to diverse audiences, both scientific and nonscientific.
- Prepares responses to requests for information.
- Assures prior approval from the Secretary, Public Health Director, or designee before sharing Tribal data.

Supports PHHS preparedness, environmental health, quality improvement, and performance management activities:

- Actively contributes to the Tribal Health Assessment and Tribal Health Improvement Plan.
- Actively contributes data, data analysis, and other assistance to the Quality Improvement staff to further continuous quality improvement across PHHS.
- Maintains personal and family emergency preparedness.
- Maintains availability for emergency response when tasked by PHHS Administration.
- Actively supports PHHS Preparedness with data, data analysis, investigation and surveillance tasks as appropriate in preparedness planning and response.
- Actively supports PHHS strategic planning, organizational analysis, workforce development, environmental health, program evaluation, health equity, and other related activities through epidemiologic expertise.

Supports PHHS Administration in the conduct, development and implementation of Tribal Public Health activities:

- Performs other duties as assigned.
- Ensures that his/her activities respect Cherokee cultural values and traditions, and those of other populations in the EBCI community.
- Advocates protection and promotion of the health and safety of individuals and the community.
- Participates in writing grants and other funding proposals.
- Participates in external and internal committees and workgroups related to areas of expertise.
- Provides technical guidance and leadership in epidemiology-related areas to colleagues in PHHS and across Tribal Government at the direction of PHHS Administration.

**Education/
Experience:**

- A master's degree in public health (MPH) or a master's of science degree in public health (MSPH) with a focus on epidemiology or analysis and assessment is required

OR

- Bachelor's or other non-epidemiology professional degree or certification (e.g., RN, MD/DO, DDS/DMD, DVM, PhD, RS) without formal academic epidemiology training and with ≥ 2 years' experience performing epidemiology work under the guidance of a Tier 2 or Tier 3 epidemiologist is required.
- Valid NC driver's license with no limitations or encumbrances on driver's license.

Special Requirements That May Apply:

- Incumbent must be willing to receive vaccinations for communicable diseases, as necessary and appropriate.
- Incumbent may be required to gain security clearance with local, state, and federal agencies for emergency preparedness.
- Incumbent may be required to travel.

Job Knowledge:

Competencies: Employee must meet the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) Tier 1 competencies as listed and as appropriate to his/her position:

1. Perform Epidemiologic Assessment and Analysis
 - A. Recognize public health problems pertinent to the population
 - B. Conduct surveillance activities
 - C. Identify acute and chronic conditions or other adverse outcomes in the population
 - D. Apply principles of good ethical/legal practice as they relate to study design and data collection, dissemination, and use
 - E. Organize data from surveillance, investigations, or other sources
 - F. Analyze data from an epidemiologic investigation or study
 - G. Summarize results of the analysis of an epidemiologic investigation and draw conclusions
 - H. Assist in developing recommended evidence-based interventions and control measures in response to epidemiologic findings with appropriate cultural/social/political framework
 - I. Assist in evaluation of programs

2. Apply Basic Public Health Sciences to Public Health Practice
 - A. Know how causes of disease affect epidemiologic practice
 - B. Identify the role of laboratory resources in epidemiologic activities
 - C. Use identified informatics tools in support of epidemiologic practice

3. Use Basic Epidemiology Communication Skills
 - A. Prepare written and oral reports and presentations that communicate necessary information to agency staff
 - B. Recognize the basic principles of risk communication
 - C. Incorporate interpersonal skills in communication with agency personnel, colleagues, and the public
 - D. Use effective communication technologies

4. Integrate Community Dimensions into Epidemiologic Practice
 - A. Provide epidemiologic input into epidemiologic studies, public health programs, and community public health planning processes at the state, local, or tribal level
 - B. Participate in development of community partnerships to support epidemiologic investigations

5. Work in a Culturally Competent Manner
 - A. Describe population by race; ethnicity; culture; societal, educational, and professional backgrounds; age; gender; religion; disability; and sexual orientation
 - B. Establish relationships with groups of special concern (e.g., disadvantaged or minority)

- groups, groups subject to health disparities, historically underrepresented groups)
 - C. Describe surveillance systems that include groups subject to health disparities or other potentially underrepresented groups (using standard categories where available)
 - D. Conduct investigations using languages and approaches tailored to population
 - E. Use standard population categories or subcategories when performing data analysis
 - F. Support public health actions that are relevant to the affected community
6. Support Financial and Operational Planning and Management of the Program
 - A. Conduct epidemiologic activities within the financial and operational plan of the agency
 - B. Describe the financial planning and budgetary process of the epidemiology program
 - C. Implement operational and financial plans
 - D. Use skills that foster collaborations, strong partnerships, and team building to accomplish epidemiology program objectives
 7. Develop and Support Systems Thinking
 - A. Support the organization's vision in all programs and activities
 - B. Use performance measures to improve epidemiology program effectiveness
 - C. Promote ethical conduct in epidemiologic practice
 - D. Practice professional development
 - E. Prepare for emergency response
 8. Support the Application of Epidemiologic Knowledge to the Development and Analysis of Public Health Policies

Complexity of Duties:

This position is responsible for epidemiology tasks in a diverse and complex Division. Must have the ability to interpret policy, laws and regulations in order to conduct investigations and surveillance, and recommend epidemiologic measures when a precedent is not available. Duties require the application of judgment, analytic and problem solving skills in order to be effective, and the ability to express policies and products clearly to diverse audiences. Judgment often involves decisions that may have critical effects on the function of the Division, particularly those that apply to epidemiologic investigations, surveillance and imposition of control measures. This position must establish and maintain good working relationships with department staff and with those contacted in the course of work, and develop and maintain credibility with clients. Good communication skills and general clerical knowledge are necessary, as is the ability to skillfully handle exposure to difficult or unpleasant matters when dealing with clients and the public. This position should maintain accurate and complete records, prepare and present oral and written proposals and presentations.

Contact with Others:

Has frequent contact with the community, outside professionals, and employees of the Public Health and Human Services Division. Must work effectively in a teamwork environment, as well as independently, and work with Tribal and local, state, or regional personnel in coordinating investigation, surveillance, and other epidemiologic tasks. Maintains professional communication with a variety of individuals, groups and agencies during stressful situations; communicates effectively, both orally and in writing; provides consultation on complex and sensitive public health issues.

Confidential Data:

All Protected Health Information (PHI) is considered highly confidential, and strict adherence to all applicable Tribal confidentiality policies, procedures and guidelines is required, including but not limited to Indian Health Service (IHS) regulations on Privacy, 42 CFR, HIPAA, Code of Conduct,

Cherokee Tribal Code, and any applicable industry standards. Improper handling of confidential information could result in damage to patient and staff relations, professional reputation, and credibility of the program. Has access to memos, informal contract proposals, budget information, and personnel files with permission of PHHS Administration, which are considered confidential and privileged.

**Mental/Visual/
Physical Effort:**

Close concentration and attention to detail are required for sustained periods of time. Subject to frequent interruptions requiring varied responses. Job duties routinely require visual acuity, manual dexterity, and the ability to speak, hear, walk, sit, stand, bend, and reach with arms and hands.

- Must be able to lift 25 pounds and carry 5 pounds on a repetitive basis.

Environment:

Works in both office and public environments, including but not limited to Tribal and outside work sites, with the potential, at times, of exposure to contagious disease and infection. Must adhere to Tribal safety policies and procedures, mirroring OSHA, to maintain a safe environment for self, employees and clients. Frequent travel outside Cherokee Tribal Lands may be required.

**Extent of
Supervision:**

This individual is directly supervised by the Public Health Director.

**Scope of
Supervision:**

The individual will be supervised by the Public Health Director and must perform independently and be self-motivated on all research and data projects.

**Responsibility for
Accuracy:**

This position requires a high degree of accuracy and transparency to preserve and advance the public's health.