

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE INVESTIGATOR

Definition:

Under supervision, participates in activities to prevent, identify and treat Tuberculosis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and other communicable diseases; provides information to health care workers and the community at large regarding communicable diseases and counsels patients regarding risk factors and prevention; may perform finger-sticks or venipunctures; personally notifies clients of test results; and promotes, provides and monitors immunization programs.

Distinguishing Characteristics

This classification is a singleton classification with a focus on prevention, information dissemination, and disease identification; interviewing and counseling duties; and linkage to treatment for communicable diseases.

Essential Functions:

- Obtains information about communicable disease patients from information provided by health care providers; obtains information about possible contacts by interviewing the patient; obtains information about the immunization status of children from schools and day care centers.
- Locates and contacts communicable disease patients and monitors their compliance with medical treatment; assesses possible treatment drug reactions.
- Takes legal action to compel recalcitrant patients to comply with laws and regulations regarding their medical condition; assists in law enforcement efforts to apprehend violators; serves and explains isolation and examination orders.
- Serves as a subject matter expert to the community on communicable diseases, such as Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and STDs; answers questions from the public, regarding communicable disease prevention, testing and treatment.
- Obtains and disseminates information about prevention, testing and treatment for HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases in the form of brochures, pamphlets and posters to community groups, medical clinics, schools and other organizations and coordinates, prepares and delivers presentations on the prevention and treatment of communicable diseases.
- Obtains information from patients about risk factors and possible means of exposure before conducting the HIV antibody test; counsels patients about methods of prevention and avoidance of risk factors; notifies each patient of the results of the HIV blood test and interprets test results; assures all patients who test HIV-positive are linked to medical treatment; refers patients and family members to psychological support services as appropriate.
- May perform finger-sticks or venipunctures to obtain blood to test for HIV antibodies or other communicable diseases.

- Researches medical records to obtain background information on patients who may have, or who may have died, as the result of a communicable disease.
- Organizes, coordinates and publicizes special events to promote immunizations.
- Evaluates effectiveness of immunization program and impact of new regulations, state directives or law changes, or vaccine supply, and makes recommendation for change.
- Documents activities with patients in electronic medical systems.
- Researches, prepares and distributes statistical reports.
- Transport patients to various clinics and appointments; pick up and/or deliver x-ray reports, laboratory specimens and/or medications.
- Maintains confidentiality of patient information.
- Assists with the research, preparation and submission of grant applications and contract proposals.
- Makes referrals to social service agencies depending upon patient needs.
- Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

Employment Standards:

High School diploma, G.E.D., or any equivalent AND completion of two years of college AND two years of paid experience performing duties related to communicable disease investigation, counseling, or health education.

OR

Any equivalent combination of education, training and experience.

Volunteer/Internship experience may be qualifying if confirmed in writing from a recognized organization.

Possession of a Class C California driver's license is required upon appointment.

Knowledge of: human anatomy and communicable diseases, medical terminology, and socioeconomic conditions affecting the spread of communicable disease; data analysis; inventory techniques; knowledge of state laws, rules and regulations regarding communicable diseases including the Health Insurance privacy and Accountability Act (HIPPA); customer service standards; and knowledge of interviewing techniques of highly personal nature.

Ability to: Interact compassionately and tactfully with patients and family members on matters of a personal and sensitive nature regardless of cultural and ethnic background, religious affiliations, gender and sexual identity, socioeconomic status, and education level; support individuals in crisis and maintain composure in high-stress situations, assess patient understanding in order to effectively communicate technical and complicated information; read and understand information contained in medical records; make clear and concise notes in patient records; understand and comply with the instructions on court orders; develop and maintain effective working relationships with departmental employees and other health care professionals; and maintain confidentiality.

A background check may be conducted for this classification.

All Kern County employees are designated “Disaster Service Workers” through state and local laws (CA Government Code Sec. 3100-3109 and Ordinance Code Title 2-Administration, Ch. 2.66 Emergency Services.) As Disaster Service Workers, all County employees are expected to remain at work, or to report for work as soon as practicable following a significant emergency or disaster.