

September 2020

HEALTHCARE HIGHLIGHTS

The Rural AHEC Student Newsletter



September's Healthcare Career Focus:

Epidemiologist

Epidemiologists conduct research to discover what causes disease or injury in various human populations, trying to determine who is at risk and how to prevent further incidence of a disease, behavior or transmission. They work within communities to stop the spread of infectious diseases using observation and statistical analysis, looking at hereditary, environmental, and healthcare factors. Many times they work in collaboration with other professionals in fields such as bioinformatics and public health.

What might I do as an Epidemiologist?

Practice in a variety of settings, such as federal, state and private agencies in academic and non-academic settings

Research and analyze data either in an office, laboratory, or field/community setting

Work closely with a team of fellow researchers to learn more about certain diseases or behavior phenomena and support development of vaccines/medications

Confer with other professionals about public health policies

Compile and communicate research findings

Plan and implement research studies in order to improve treatment of certain populations or identify causes of disease transmission

Guide implementation of public health strategy

Conduct interviews in the community to determine at-risk populations and develop explanations for how a disease continues to spread



How do I become an Epidemiologist?

- Attend and graduate from a bachelor degree program in public health, biostatistics, or other health science
- Obtain work experience through an internship or other work program in public health or related field
- Earn a master's degree in public health or medicine
- Complete certification in public health or epidemiology—some certifications require exam
- Years of higher education range from 6—9 years

Average Salary:
\$93,670 in metropolitan NY

What is it really like to be an Epidemiologist?

Epidemiologists have become heroes in this year of the Coronavirus Pandemic. The research they have done has led to the imminent development of a vaccine and other treatment protocols for the virus. The need for professionals in this field will continue to increase through the next decade, and the career outlook is very bright.

If you are interested in becoming an epidemiologist, you should work to develop the following skills:

- Research and analytical skills
- Biotechnology wet lab skills
- Communication skills, both written and verbal
- Collaboration and teamwork abilities
- Pattern-seeking skills

Watch this short video about what epidemiologists do: <https://www.careeronestop.org/videos/careeronestop-videos.aspx?videocode=19104100>

Meet Sarah, an epidemiologist who works for the CDC: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0CgNiBVeC8> and also Linda, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YovSyrTUpxc>



“The work of epidemiology is related to unanswered questions, but also to unquestioned answers...”

Patricia Buffer
University of California Epidemiologist

“It’s a basic mantra of epidemiology and public health: Follow the data (to learn where and how the disease spreads)...”

Rajiv Bhatia
Stanford University Teaching Physician and Epidemiologist

“...you can be more strategic on your interventions if you know where exposures actually occur...”

Jeffrey Klausner
University of California Teaching Physician and Epidemiologist

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Please contact us if you have questions about healthcare career opportunities or educational pathways to healthcare careers!

Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center (R-AHEC) is one of nine centers in the New York State Area Health Education Center (NYS AHEC) organization. Our mission is to improve health and healthcare through education.

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