



NEPHTC Health Equity Internship Program Agency Project Proposal

The New England Public Health Training Center invites public and nonprofit health agencies and organizations in New England, particularly those serving underserved areas and populations, to submit health equity internship project opportunities for public health students by filling out the following proposal form. Students selected to work on approved projects will receive a \$3,500 stipend from NEPHTC.

What is a health equity project? Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Health equity projects focus on removing or reducing barriers to health caused by race or ethnicity, education, income, location or other social factors. Proposed projects benefit medically underserved populations and may address any health or social problem. Highly desired are projects for agencies located in [medically underserved areas](#) or [rural areas](#).

General Overview

Organization Name	VT Department of Health White River Junction District
Primary Contact Name	Rudy Fedrizzi, MD
Primary Contact Title	District Director of Public Health Services
Primary Contact Email	Rudolph.fedrizzi@vermont.gov
Street Address	118 Prospect Street, Suite 300
City, State, ZIP Code	White River Junction, VT 05001
Primary Contact Phone	802-281-4501

1. Organization description, including service area, services and population(s) served

Local district health office serving 22 towns in southern Orange and northern Windsor counties of east central VT. Population of more than 47,600. Service areas include WIC, Maternal and Child Health, School and Workplace Health, Immunization, Epidemiology/Infectious Disease, Emergency Preparedness, Substance Misuse Prevention, Chronic Disease Prevention, Food and Lodging Inspection

Project Overview

2. Internship project title

Understanding and Addressing Social Isolation and Loneliness as Public Health Issues

3. Project description

Describe the project fully. Include scope of desired/expected activities, any specialized skills needed, list those who will be involved (units, departments, etc.) and expected outcomes/deliverables.

Looking to build off a pilot project from New Hampshire using the tool of deliberative dialogue to engage communities in a better understanding of social isolation and possible solutions, explore the literature on community and policy-based solutions to lessen social isolation and loneliness especially in seniors, and develop an implementation plan with local partners to expand or create programs or policy change that could lessen the negative impacts of isolation in our district. The expectation is that what is learned and done in the region could be replicated in other district offices across the state.

4. What kind of student might be a good fit for this project? Note: If you have already identified a student, please provide student information here, including degree being pursued and home academic institution.

Describe the types of background, skills, aptitudes most desired.

Self-motivated, good research skills, comfortable working intergenerationally since teen and older adults face a greater burden of isolation.

5. How does this project help your organization to improve health equity?

Studies show that those experiencing social isolation and/or loneliness face poorer health outcomes, even increased mortality, compared to those who feel socially connected.

6. Project location if not the same as organization address (include complete address with zip code)

Same as district office

7. Project timeline (start and end date with any deadlines)

Ongoing with immediate start date

8. Project supervisor name, academic credentials and description of public health practice experience

Rudy Fedrizzi, MD - 17 years as a practicing obstetrician-gynecologist and for the past 9 years non-clinical roles in population health improvement, clinical quality improvement and public health management. For the past several years he has had a particular interest in social isolation and has presented on this issue at the New England Rural Health Roundtable, Aging in VT Conference and APHA Annual Meeting.

9. Please feel free to share any additional information on your project that might be helpful to us.

Return to
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