**Maternal & Child Health**

**Research Fellowships**

**2018-2019 Project Descriptions**

**Stigma and HIV Prevention among Women in Haiti**

**Professor:** Dr. Jasmine Abrams

Sabotaging the possibility of an AIDS free generation, stigma continues to undermine primary and secondary prevention efforts in Haiti. Given Haitian women’s increased vulnerability for HIV, the possibility of perinatal transmission, and the likelihood of increased contact with healthcare providers during pregnancy, this study aims to develop and pilot a culturally relevant multilevel intervention targeted at lessening the influence of stigma in undermining important preventative and treatment seeking behaviors among pregnant Haitian women. The intervention will train providers in healthcare settings and traditional birth attendants (i.e., matrones) in community settings to abate stigmatizing attitudes and behaviors so as to eliminate the negative impact of stigma before it begins. The intervention will have two components: (1) a healthcare system intervention for providers (i.e., doctors, nurses, and midwives) serving pregnant women and (2) a community-level intervention for matrones. Using results of the formative research, the intervention will be developed by a working leadership group consisting of HIV prevention experts, healthcare providers, and community members. To obtain information about intervention acceptability, feasibility, satisfaction, and preliminary evidence of improved outcomes, we will conduct a pilot quasi-experimental trial of providers at four healthcare facilities and matrones in the surrounding communities. Additionally, we will assess the indirect impact of the intervention assessments with pregnant women under the care of providers/matrones in the control and intervention groups. By addressing stigmatizing attitudes and associated behavior in healthcare and community settings, we aim to create an environment that will foster greater utilization of HIV preventive and treatment services in order to reduce HIV risk for pregnant women, their unborn children, and their partners.

Fellow will have the opportunity to receive training in global health research ethics, intervention development and implementation, evaluation, and community based mixed methods research. Travel to Haiti is possible for fellows but contingent on funding and safety. Fellows will work with Dr. Abrams to assist with:

* Quantitative and qualitative data collection, management, and analysis
* Conducting literature reviews
* Developing and organizing intervention materials
* Dissemination of project findings via scholarly conferences and publications
* Assisting with developing reports and presentation materials for project team meetings, community meetings, and funders
* Assisting with developing grant application materials for follow up project