



## Maternal & Child Health Practice Fellowships/Practica 2020-21 Project Descriptions

### **Opportunities (*One Fellow per project*)**

1. Accompany Doula Care: Introduction to Project Management
2. Health Law Advocates: Mental Health Advocacy Program for Kids
3. Massachusetts Department of Public Health: Promoting a Healing Centered Work Environment
4. Boston Medical Center: Integrating public health preventive screening and intervention into clinical care for adolescents
5. Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts: Strategic Plan Operations

### **Desired Qualities for all Practice Projects**

- Excellent organizational and communication skills (oral and written)
- Demonstrated ability working with diverse groups of people
- Ability to work independently or as part of a team
- Ability to adjust to changing situations to meet changing program requirements

### **Time Commitment**

- Fellowships will run from December 2020 to December 2021, with a time commitment of 1-1.5 days a week.
- Fellows should communicate with their site preceptors regarding time away for holidays and school breaks.
- Plans for summer should also be discussed ahead of time so all involved are aware of whether the Fellow will be available during that time.

**Supervision:** The MCH Practice Fellow will generally be provided guidance on a weekly or biweekly basis on a schedule agreed upon by the Fellow and their mentor/supervisor.

**Practicum Option:** The MCH Practice Fellowship may be used as your BUSPH Practicum if you choose. If you choose this option, please be sure to meet all the regular practicum requirements.

## Introduction to Project Management *Accompany Doula Care*



**Supervisor & Mentor:** Christina Gebel, MPH  
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**Location:** Remote/Commuting in Boston Area (public transit friendly)

**Background:** Accompany Doula Care (also referred to as Accompany) is a Boston-based doula collective focused on reducing health inequities and improving birth outcomes. Accompany was founded in 2016 by six doulas, three of whom are BUSPH alumni, who wished to find a way to fully integrate doulas into the healthcare system, such that every birthing person would have access to doula services, particularly those populations who experience healthcare inequities and could most benefit from doula care. Accompany works in collaboration with the Boston Association for Childbirth Education-Nursing Mothers' Council (BACE-NMC) and other grant and funding partners.

In addition to providing cultural and linguistic appropriate doula services, Accompany is committed to workforce development and addressing barriers that people of color often face when pursuing birth work professions. Accompany wants to bridge the gap between birthing people of color and doulas of color by increasing the number of doulas of color through recruitment and training of new doulas, while also increasing the skill set of existing doulas of color.

Accompany is seeking a MCH fellow to help with ramping up and launching partnerships with two major funders: the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the National Institute of Health (NIH). This fellowship is a good fit for someone who wants to learn more about how community partners and nonprofits develop, maintain, and grow relationships with major partners. If you wish to explore project management roles after graduating with your MPH, this will give you firsthand experience and skill sets to use when you enter the job market.

### **Fellowship Description**

The fellow will work closely with the current Program Manager and one of the co-Founders, both alums of BUSPH. The fellow will assist in strategic planning for the ramping up of two major grants awarded to Accompany as a community partner. While there are many activities related to this goal, the fellow will work together with Accompany staff to carve out portions of that work that best match their skills and interests.

Activities may include the following:

- Designing recruitment materials for focus groups
- Adapting current data management tools to meet the needs of the grant deliverables
- Attending meetings with fellow doula program leadership in Boston and Western MA to co-design deliverables for the grant
- Assisting in budget tracking and invoicing

- Assisting in grant deliverable tracking

**Additional Qualifications**

A strong candidate will be detailed-oriented, organized, have strong writing skills, demonstrate capacity to be a team player and ability to foster positive relationships with diverse stakeholders. A strong candidate will have a passion for maternal and child health, doula care, and reducing birth inequities. The candidate will also have a “jump right in” approach and have the ability to take initiative and work independently on projects.

## **Mental Health Advocacy Project for Kids Health Law Advocates**

**Supervisor & Mentor:** Marisol Garcia, JD  
Project Director

[mgarcia@hla-inc.org](mailto:mgarcia@hla-inc.org)

Patricia Elliott, DrPH  
Clinical Associate Professor, CHS Dept.  
[pelliott@bu.edu](mailto:pelliott@bu.edu)



**Location:** Remote/One Federal Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02110

**Background:** Health Law Advocates' innovative Mental Health Advocacy Program for Kids (MHAP for Kids) eliminates barriers to mental health care for at-risk youth with mental illness. The program embeds lawyers in state-funded Family Resource Centers in 7 counties across Massachusetts. These attorneys advocate on behalf of children with schools, state agencies, the court system, and health insurers to improve access to mental health care. A multi-year independent study by BUSPH found that the program significantly improves the mental health of participating children and their parents, significantly improves family functioning and significantly improves school attendance. Additionally, the study concluded that MHAP for Kids significantly reduces the need for children's emergency room visits, inpatient admissions and incarceration, thereby saving the state significant sums. HLA's goals are to expand MHAP for Kids statewide and to secure state dollars as the primary sustainable funding source.

As HLA aggressively works toward expanding MHAP for Kids and securing sustainable state funding, HLA seeks assistance with collecting information to support, inform, and guide our efforts.

### **Fellowship Description**

The MCH Practice Fellow will:

- contact families and schedule interviews
- conduct interviews with parents and stakeholders in-person or by phone
- collect and analyze data
- maintain accurate records of interviews, safeguarding the confidentiality of subjects
- participate in administrative duties related to study management, analysis, and dissemination of findings
- work within the team to support the program
- job-shadow or attend meetings/sessions to learn about the broader work of Health Law Advocates, the public interest law firm where this program sits

Ideal candidates will have a flexible schedule.



## **Promoting a Healing Centered Work Environment Massachusetts Department of Public Health**

### **Supervisor & Mentor:**

Beth Buxton, LCSW  
Director, Maternal Health Initiatives  
Division of Pregnancy, Infancy and Early Childhood (DPIE)  
Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
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857-383-9935

**Location:** Remote/DPH Central Office at 250 Washington Street in Boston

### **Background:**

The Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant is a national initiative that provides a foundation for ensuring the health and well-being of parents, children, youth, including children and youth with special health needs, and their families. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) Title V Program conducts a needs assessment every five years. As a result of the 2020 needs assessment, ten priorities were identified to inform the work over the next five years. One of those priorities is to support equitable healing centered systems and approaches to mitigate the effects of trauma, including racial, historical, structural, community, family and childhood trauma.

Trauma affects individuals, communities, and systems. According to the San Francisco Department of Public Health, “trauma informed systems work is based on the understanding that our service delivery systems can inadvertently reinforce oppression and create harm. When our systems are traumatized, it prevents us from responding effectively to each other and the people we serve.”<sup>1</sup> The performance measure for this priority tracks Title V efforts to improve policies, practices, and conditions to increase DPH’s capacity to operate as a trauma-informed and healing-centered organization.

Title V staff have convened an implementation team to develop a work plan for this priority that incorporates a focus on the dual traumas of COVID-19 and structural racism and their impact on community, family and childhood.

In FY19, the Division for Pregnancy, Infancy, and Early Childhood within DPH developed an organizational assessment tool to examine the extent to which current workplace culture/norms, procedures, and practices align with our vision of a trauma-informed organization and system of care, and to identify key priorities to address moving forward. However, the survey did not analyze responses by race/ethnicity due to the small sample size

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1 <http://traumatransformed.org/wp-content/uploads/TIS-Program-Overview-11-15-17.pdf>

and the survey lacked a focus on attributes of a healing centered environment and whether staff felt these were present in their work culture.

### **Fellowship Description**

The implementation team along with BU MCH students will help to revise the organizational assessment to more explicitly include race/ethnicity of respondents and include additional questions on experiences of equity, resilience and healing. Specific tasks will include a literature review, key informant interviews, and the drafting, implementation and analysis of the survey. The organizational assessment will be the tool used to measure performance and progress on this Title V priority over the next five years. Questions to be answered include:

- What percentage of Title V staff in two Bureaus within DPH report a workplace culture that reflects a safe and supportive environment to mitigate primary and secondary trauma?
- What strategies and opportunities can be implemented to promote a healing centered environment?

The MCH Fellow will be a member of the Title V Healing Centered Work group. Specific activities and deliverables may include, but are not limited to:

- Attend and participate in Title V Healing Centered Work group meetings including assisting with agenda setting, meeting facilitation and note taking.
- A literature review report on tools/examples of organizational healing centered environments and trauma informed systems including schools, health departments, etc.
- Revise and produce a survey instrument based on feedback from key informant interviews and draft final survey
- Summation of key informant interviews
- Analysis and reporting on the survey results with recommendations for improvements

### **Additional Qualifications**

- Flexible, enthusiastic, self-motivated
- Committed to supporting MDPH's mission of promoting and improving health for all, with a focus on racial equity

Experience or interest in quality improvement preferred

**Integrating Public Health Preventive Screening and  
Intervention into Clinical Care for Adolescents**  
*Boston Medical Center*



EXCEPTIONAL CARE. WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

**Supervisor & Mentor:** Edward Bernstein, MD,  
Professor, Emergency Medicine; Community Health Sciences  
[ebernste@bu.edu](mailto:ebernste@bu.edu)

Karin Rallo, Nurse Manager, Emergency Department

**Location:** Health Promotion Advocacy Program  
Pediatric Emergency Department  
Boston Medical Center

**Fellowship Description**

Participate in the Health Promotion Advocacy Program (HPAP) in the Pediatric Emergency Department (PED) at Boston Medical Center. You will learn how to screen adolescents for the social determinants of health and high-risk behaviors, use motivational interviewing to encourage behavior change, and customize and negotiate referrals to adolescent-friendly resources for multiple intersecting problems.

This project allows Fellows to see how an evidence-based public health intervention can improve both patient care and the health of the community, and identifies the challenges in bring intervention into the emergency care setting. Fellows will use REDCap to collect and analyze health and safety data (food, housing, safety, education, and financial and other insecurities), maintain a list of referrals, and present results to the PED leadership to enhance and improve program quality. Current Fellows will also help orient and train the following year's incoming Fellows.

**Strategic Plan Operations**  
***Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts***  
***(PPLM)***



Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

**Supervisor & Mentor:** Sophie Howard, Project Manager

**Location:** Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

**Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (PPLM)** is an affiliate of the nation's leading sexual and reproductive health care provider and advocate, Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Our mission is to protect and promote sexual and reproductive health by providing health services, education, and advocacy. We are currently engaged in a three-year Strategic Plan to center health equity in our organization and seek to engage an MCH Practice Fellow to assist with the tracking, analysis and presentation of internal progress and public health outcome metrics.

**PPLM's Health Equity Vision and Commitment Statement:**

PPLM believes sexual health is essential to every person's overall health, well-being, and happiness. Based on our conversations, internally and externally, and local public health data, we know that people of color in Massachusetts do not have equitable access to sexual and reproductive health care and education. This is unjust and an affront to our mission. PPLM has the tools, resources, and obligation to partner in our communities to promote health equity, especially as it relates to sexual and reproductive health.

To do this, we must start with ourselves. In order to authentically address health equity in communities across Massachusetts, we are taking focused steps to make progress in our own organization. We have embarked on a diversity, equity, and inclusion process that will lead us toward becoming an organization that better reflects our patients and embodies cultural humility. Simultaneously, we will focus on specific sexual and reproductive health outcomes in key areas throughout the state where we believe the greatest impact can be achieved for people of color based on need, PPLM presence, and public support.

Within the next three years, our work with community partners will result in people of color experiencing:

- Greater access to sexual and reproductive health care and education;
- Decreased stigma when accessing sexual and reproductive health services;
- Increased opportunity for authentic and culturally appropriate care; and
- Better sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

Additionally, we believe every person should have equitable access to safe, legal abortion, no matter who they are or where they live. PPLM recognizes that geographical and systemic barriers entrenched in discrimination and stigma prevent people in Massachusetts from having equitable opportunity to choose their own path and access abortion care. To combat this, we will also focus on expanding abortion access across the Commonwealth.

**Scope of Fellowship:**

The MCH Fellow will be a member of the Strategic Plan Operations team at PPLM. Specific activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Assist with program data collection, analysis and presentation related to PPLM's Strategic Plan



- Connect monthly with PPLM employees across the organization to gather updates on internal progress and programmatic outcome metrics
- Build skills in data interpretation and analysis using a health equity lens
- Support Strategic Plan Operations team in the ongoing review of metrics' relevance to the ever-adapting nature of community-based work and collaborate on any needed edits or additions
- Input data into monthly Dashboards to be presented at Strategic Plan Operations team, Executive team and Board meetings
- Create graphs and other data visualizations to optimize data analysis
- Support Strategic Plan leadership in effectively employing Dashboards to analyze progress and impact of health equity initiatives
- Attend Strategic Plan Operations team meetings, if schedule allows, to contribute to discussions on health equity and successfully implementing data-informed public health initiatives

The ideal candidate will be a flexible and enthusiastic individual who is self-motivated and committed to supporting PPLM's mission. Strong verbal and written communication skills and dedication to health equity are required. Experience with Microsoft Excel and data analysis is desired. Interest in working with dashboards is a plus.

This is a remote position with the option to be based at PPLM's Greater Boston location in the future, depending on changes to PPLM's COVID-19 work from home policy. Whether working from home or in the office, this position requires working closely with PPLM employees across the state via video conference, phone and email.