



## HARNEY COUNTY

### *Disease Investigative Specialist*

**Days / Hours:** 37.5 hours per week  
**Salary/Benefits:** Minimum \$22.14 DOE, dependent upon with or without degrees  
M-F some weekends, benefitted

#### **PURPOSE OF POSITION:**

The position is a full-time joint position between Harney, Grant, and Baker County, based in Burns. A Disease Investigative Specialist is a public health professional providing support to the health department in the fight against communicable disease, including COVID-19 and sexually transmitted infections. The Disease Investigative Specialist is responsible for contacting people with laboratory-confirmed, probable, and suspected diagnoses of communicable disease and providing health education and guidance in order to interrupt ongoing disease transmission. This position will require prioritization, prompt action, and attention to detail in documentation and data management as multiple investigations could be conducted simultaneously. Disease Investigative Specialists are required to comply with policies and procedures provided by the health department and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) regarding confidentiality and data security. In addition, this position will work to educate the population through organizing a campaign through the department to raise awareness of communicable diseases in the counties.

#### **ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:**

- Obtain and review patient demographic, location, laboratory, clinical, and risk information available in health department surveillance systems or other data systems in order to determine investigation priorities, per local protocols.
- Initiate prompt communication with patients diagnosed with communicable disease through text, phone calls, email, and other communication platforms as necessary.
- Employ dynamic communication and interpersonal skills, cultural competency and sensitivity, tactful language, and empathetic interviewing skills to build rapport and maintain trust with patients of varied backgrounds.
- Verify patient's identity during initial communications and prior to disclosing confidential information. Assure confidentiality and carry out efforts to locate and communicate with patients in a manner that preserves the confidentiality and privacy of all involved.
- Obtain and document detailed information regarding patient diagnosis, demographics, communicable disease symptoms and their onset date(s), clinical course, underlying medical conditions, and other risk factors.
- Review clinically documented and patient's self-reported communicable disease symptom history to determine the time-frame when the patient was infectious and not under isolation (contact elicitation window).
- Work with the patient to identify close contacts during the contact elicitation window.
- Provide approved information on isolation, treatment, and other recommendations. Coordinate any needed referrals for testing or health care, per local protocols.
- Assess patient's ability to safely and effectively isolate at home, if required, with adequate water, food, prescription medicines, and other necessities. Identify barriers to necessary interventions and facilitate appropriate referrals, per local protocols. Collaborate with key service providers to ensure expedited initiation of appropriate medical or social support services, per local protocols.
- Document pertinent information in communicable disease case investigation forms, entering data into health department data/surveillance systems. Document detailed information on close contacts and initiate contact investigations to be assigned to appropriate staff per local protocols. Facilitate inter-jurisdictional referral of patient or contact information as relevant.
- Use a computer, tablet, and/or cell phone with appropriate access to required applications, databases, and/or web-based platforms, daily. Document pertinent information in communicable disease contact

- tracing forms, and conduct data entry into health department data/surveillance systems while adhering to protocols for completeness, timeliness, and frequency.
- Collaborate and coordinate with a team of public health professionals to efficiently obtain clinical and sociodemographic information, provide necessary supportive services, and notify close contacts of exposure to communicable disease, when required.
  - As needed and relevant, refer selected patients and contacts to appropriate health department infection control or clinical personnel for further investigation or case management.
  - Participate in requisite trainings, regular department meetings, and quality monitoring improvement activities in order to ensure and enhance the quality of case investigation activities and program outcomes.
  - Maintain patient confidentiality and ensure that all information is collected in concordance with local data privacy and confidentiality standards.
  - Work with Director, CD nurse, and public health nurse to determine best strategy to combat STI spread in the county, including crafting and executing an education and prevention campaign to minimize spread and infection.

### **Mandatory Requirements**

- Strong verbal and written communication skills, including active listening, emotional intelligence
- Ability to interact in an empathetic and nonjudgmental manner with culturally diverse populations and persons experiencing a wide range of social conditions
- Ability to read and write in English
- Ability to work weekends
- Strong time management skills (organization, prioritization, multitasking)
- Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team
- Proficiency with use of computers (desktop, laptop, tablet)
- Proficiency with use of mobile devices (smartphones, mobile apps)
- High School Diploma or GED

### **PREFERRED BUT NOT REQUIRED:**

- Associate's degree or higher.
- Nursing Experience
- Nursing License (LPN/RN/NP)
- Past government experience
- Bilingual in English and Spanish
- Experience conducting telephone-based or in-person interviews and collecting and entering data
- Experience in public health

**Application Closing Date and Time:** April 29, 2022 Obtain an employment application and full job description from Human Resources, by email at [deanna.atwell@co.harney.or.us](mailto:deanna.atwell@co.harney.or.us) or call 541-573-8373, The application is also available on the Harney County website under the Human Resource Department.

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