



**KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
ACADEMIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Understanding of Adolescent Attitudes Regarding Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STIs)
SEMESTER: Spring/Summer 2019
PRECEPTOR: Nirali Bora/April Hight

DESCRIPTION: The numbers of cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis rose for the fourth consecutive year in 2017. The majority of these increases occurred among adolescents. The purpose of this internship is to better understand adolescent attitudes around STIs in Kent County. Specifically, the intern will investigate adolescent attitudes around perception of risk, access to testing services, and barriers/facilitators to testing and treatment.

IMPORTANCE TO PUBLIC HEALTH: Chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis are common, curable infections. However, they are often asymptomatic, so people remain unaware of the infection unless they undergo regular testing. If left untreated, these STIs can cause severe infections in the reproductive system and can even cause sterility in males and infertility in females. If syphilis is left untreated for a long period of time, it can cause damage to the brain, eyes, hear, nerve, bones, joints, and liver.

APPLICABLE ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES:

- Inform, educate, and empower
- Mobilize community partnerships
- Link people to health services
- Research new insights

PROJECT DELIVERABLES:

- Based on conversations with adolescents in Kent County, the intern will identify the largest barriers to STI testing and treatment, as well as gain a better understanding of adolescents' overall attitudes about STIs.
- This information will be used to develop an intervention to better engage adolescents in STI testing.
- The intern will compile the results for their internship into a presentation for Student Research Day

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Students applying for this internship must be enrolled in a bachelor's or master's degree program. Computer proficiency required.

SKILLS: The student selected for this internship opportunity should expect to develop public health skills and competencies in the following categories:

- Speak effectively to individuals/groups
- Identify problems and needs
- Set priorities
- Summarize/write clearly and concisely
- Handle many tasks at once
- Accept differing opinions
- Identify appropriate information sources