

Epidemiologist



What do you like best about your job?

Epidemiology looks at trends and patterns in disease and health at a population level. What I like most about my job is that it embodies my field of study in a very real and practical way. I enjoy the intellectual stimulation and challenge of applying scientific principles and rigour in an applied, 'real world' setting.

I also enjoy the privilege of working with highly competent colleagues in a variety of content areas. I provide expertise and support to all areas of the Public Health department, from infectious diseases to chronic diseases, injury prevention to sexual health, environmental health to child health.

Describe your typical day?

I could be writing a report about the latest local health data, debating the optimal way to analyze statistics with other epidemiologists and health data analysts, advising public health staff on the best method to collect and analyze data, doing a presentation on local health data in the community, and collaborating with my colleagues in other health units on a joint surveillance project. I could also get called in to support an investigation into an outbreak of infectious disease.

How are you making a difference?

I like to think that my role is to make sense out of numbers. My team and I take large amounts of unwieldy data, translate it into 'stories' that everyone can understand. Our goal is getting "the right information to the right people at the right time". High quality information is critical for the Public Health department to make informed decisions to promote and protect the health of our local community.

What do you like about working or living in Waterloo Region?

Waterloo Region is a wonderfully diverse place to live and work. It has bustling, thriving urban centres in the cities, and quiet, open spaces in the rural townships. This region remembers and values its historic roots but is also moving forward in progressive ways.



Why did you choose to work for Region of Waterloo Public Health?

The Region has a reputation as a top employer, making the decision easier. I am passionate about helping improve the lives of others, and Region of Waterloo Public Health is an ideal place to channel such passion. I am surrounded by colleagues who are equally dedicated. I feel privileged to work with such highly competent and passionate people.

What would you tell someone considering a career as a Public Health Epidemiologist?

To be successful as a Public Health Epidemiologist, you need to be able to bridge the 'research' world and the 'real world'. You must have great attention to detail, apply scientific rigour to your work and have the tenacity to see problems through. You must be cognizant of the 'big picture', the reasons why we need the information, and be adaptable. You must have strong written and verbal communication skills to translate technical information so that it can be understood by others. If this challenge sounds invigorating, you would enjoy being a Public Health Epidemiologist!

Areas you could work in:

- Epidemiology and Health Analytics

Qualifications you need:

- A Masters Degree in Epidemiology and two years relevant experience
- Working knowledge of public health programming and the impact of social, economic, and environmental factors on health
- Working knowledge of relevant legislation, including Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's Mandatory Programs, Health Protection and Promotion Act, Personal Health Information

Protection Act, and Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

- Analytical, human relations and organizational skills
- Computer proficiency, using a variety of software applications
- Working knowledge of computerized information systems and database management

Wage/salary range:

- Approximately \$73,500 to \$91,900 annually (2015 rates)

Region of Waterloo Public Health

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