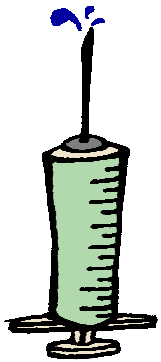


# Vaccine Science Fellowship for Family Physicians: Bridging Public Health and Primary Care

Paul Hunter, M.D., Elizabeth Rosenblum, M.D., Douglas Campos-Outcalt, M.D., Jonathan Temte, M.D., Ph.D., Herbert Young, M.D., Bellinda Schoof, MHA, CPHQ, Pamela Carter-Smith, MPA



**Background:** Family physicians provide large numbers of vaccinations to patients of all ages. Leaders in family medicine actively contribute to the development of vaccine policies at the local, state and national level. In order to assure a continued cadre of family physicians interested in the science of vaccine development, production and policy, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) developed a Vaccine Science Fellowship program. The fellowship program sponsors two fellows per cycle. Since most residency programs and practice environments do not prepare primary care physicians for leadership roles in vaccine science and policy, the fellowship is designed to increase the knowledge and “hands-on” experience of vaccine safety, vaccine production and public acceptance of vaccines.

**Setting:** National medical professional association

**Population:** Family Physicians

**Project Description:** The AAFP Vaccine Science Fellowship is a one-year experience in vaccine science, production and policy. The fellowship provides stipends and travel for two fellows per year for the overlapping years July 2009 to June 2010 and April 2010 to March 2011. At monthly conference calls family medicine mentors and fellows discuss recent ACIP recommendations and upcoming issues. One or two tours of production facilities provide insight into scientific and logistic complexities of vaccine manufacture. Attendance at open meetings of the National Vaccine Advisory Council, state immunization coalition and ACIP and at vaccine related national scientific conferences also advance the knowledge of fellows.

**Results/Lessons Learned:** Family physicians can provide a unique voice in the development and implementation of vaccine policy. A fellowship can efficiently provide Vaccine Fellows with the knowledge, experience, and contacts they need to be effective leaders in their communities, states, and nationally. As a result, the cadre of family physicians with expertise in vaccine science is enhanced.



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