

Susan Law, MD/MPH

Concentration in Epidemiology

What brought you to the field of Public Health?

I am interested in improving stroke care for the citizens of Brooklyn. This includes applying the latest findings in clinical trials, and working to improve response time to stroke patients when they reach the hospital. I knew that a thorough understanding of epidemiology, biostatistics, health policy issues and an awareness of how our local environment affects health decision-making would enhance my skill set as a physician.



Why SUNY Downstate SPH?

During my neurology residency at SUNY Downstate, the union representing residents gave a financial opportunity to take Public Health courses and obtain an MPH. Further, the flexible course schedule allowed me to take public health courses during my residency, which was extremely helpful.

Could you tell us about your fieldwork?

I investigated the incidence of intracerebral hemorrhage at Kings County Hospital since the initiation of the American Heart Association Get With the Guidelines Program. I described incident cases of stroke in terms of demographic factors, stroke location, mortality, co-morbidities and other parameters. I compared my findings to national clinical trials on stroke incidence with the goal of understanding how our patient population may differ from the general population of stroke patients. Findings from this study can be used to tailor stroke care to the community we serve.

How has studying at SUNY Downstate prepared you for a career in Public Health?

The rigor and quality of teaching in the MPH program at SUNY Downstate has helped me approach questions related to quality improvement, optimizing workflow and applying the findings of clinical trials with much more confidence and ease. My training prepared me to design and implement research to optimize our clinical approaches.

What kind of work do you hope to do after completing your Public Health degree at Downstate?

My goal is to conduct more epidemiologic studies on the neurology patients seen at Kings County Hospital and University Hospital—Brooklyn. I am currently involved in several clinical trials, and using my MPH training, I hope to initiate my own in the future.