

SETTING DESCRIPTION

You all are epidemiologists, or scientists that study the incidence, distribution, and control of disease in a population, and you work for the state department of health. You just received a phone call from *Ms. Ima Well* who was reporting a potential disease cluster. A disease cluster is when a specific type of illness occurs in an identified population within a given period of time and the number of people with the illness exceeds the normal disease rate.

Your supervisor has assigned all of you to this case to work as a team. You need to determine if this cluster is real or if it falls within the same incidence rate as the rest of the nation's population (i.e. there is no difference between the people you study and everyone else). At the end of the game you decide if this disease cluster report merits further investigation.

CASE DESCRIPTION: MS. IMA WELL

Ms. Well isn't so well, she is 66 years old and has recently been diagnosed with colorectal cancer. She currently lives in a retirement complex in Somewhere Town, Florida. She has lived in Somewhere Town for five years. Prior to that Ms. Well lived with her husband in Australia, but their divorce prompted her to move to Florida. After she was diagnosed with cancer, she noticed that several of her neighbors also had cancer. She thought it was peculiar that so many people she knew were ill and it made her wonder if there was something wrong with where they live. She saw a report on the news about cancer clusters and contaminated water. The reporters recommended calling the state health department if anyone suspected a disease cluster in their area – so she did.