

Skills and interests (director of public health)

This page describes some of the key skills needed by directors of public health (DPHs).

There are wide variety of highly developed skills and qualities you will need to work as a director of public health. As well as having an in-depth understanding of public health practice, you'll be able to use your specialist knowledge to influence, advise and guide the delivery of services and public health priorities.

Director of public health in conversation

As a DPH you'll want to make a real difference to people's lives.

As a DPH, you'll be part of a wider team of people working at lots of different levels, with different cultures and in different settings. As such, you'll need to be able to relate well to others and have excellent overall interpersonal skills to enable effective working. Promoting fairness and equity will be a crucial quality in your day-to-day work.

You'll want to make a real difference to people's lives and have a passion for the delivery of improved health outcomes for individuals, groups and communities.

Directors of public health have skills and knowledge primarily at levels 8 and 9 of the Skills for Health Career Framework ^[1].

You might also find it helpful to take a look at our [career planning section](#) ^[2] to think more about the and skills and qualities you have to offer.

Additional skills needed by DPHs include:

- leadership skills
- financial management skills
- project and change management skills
- numerical and analytical skills

- **Leadership skills**

- you'll have substantial senior experience in order to be able to make visionary, challenging and often difficult decisions about how services are delivered
- you'll have high-level skills in diplomacy, appropriate for working in complex political and social environments
- you'll be a creative, proactive and innovative thinker who is able to persuade and influence

- **Financial management skills**

- you'll need strong budget management skills to ensure that available resources gain maximum benefit
- you'll need to make difficult decisions about how resources are used

- **Project and change management skills**

- you'll have high-level project and change management skills to be able to plan ahead, meet tight deadlines and cope with multiple and changing demands
- you'll be skilled in managing the process of change and being able to support others through processes of change

- **Numerical and analytical skills**

- you'll need to be able to analyse, interpret and act on a range of available evidence sources, for example, in designing developing and implementing policies and government guidance on a particular topic or area of public health.
- you'll be substantially numerate, with highly developed analytical skills
- you'll have substantial experience of using both qualitative and quantitative data

Partner logos

Faculty of Public Health ^[3]

Local Government Association logo ^[4]

Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/roles-public-health/director-public-health/skills-and-interests-director-public-health>

Links

[1]

http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/index.php?option=com_mtree&task=att_download&link_id=163&cf_i

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning> [3] <http://www.fph.org.uk/> [4] <http://www.local.gov.uk/>