

Public health consultants and specialists

Public health specialists and consultants help people and communities maximise their potential for a healthy, happy and productive life, so they can live healthier for longer.

You'll focus on health at a population level, looking at ways to make communities and environments healthier, reducing ill-health and tackling health inequalities.

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[Download transcript](#) ^[3]

Life as a public health specialist and consultant

Public health specialists and consultants are strategists, senior managers or senior scientists in public health. You'll need skills and knowledge in health protection, health improvement and healthcare public health but, in practice, you may specialise in one area.

Public health specialists come from a wide range of backgrounds, and may or may not hold a medical degree.

You could be employed in different sectors, including local government, central government or its executive agencies, the NHS, universities, the defence services, the private sector or the voluntary and social enterprise sector.

Daniel Flecknoe

Specialty registrar in public health

The training programme is fantastic, because as well as giving you the opportunity to experience a lot of different sorts of public health work, you also have a certain freedom to pursue your personal interests, so long as you can demonstrate that you are achieving the required competencies.

[Read Daniel's story](#) ^[4]

As a public health specialist or consultant, you'll work with a range of organisations to:

- deal with complex public health issues
- either lead or work with senior colleagues to plan and deliver policies and programmes ('interventions') that aim to influence the health of groups of people ('populations') at local, regional and national levels
- plan and lead the evaluation of such programmes
- provide professional, evidence-based and ethical advice to guide the commissioning of services, ensuring that they are high-quality, clinically safe, cost-effective, and that they will improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities across primary care [5], secondary care [6], and social care
- lead on gathering and interpreting information

One area you could specialise in is epidemiology [7], leading on projects to tackle outbreaks of disease or environmental hazards. You'll investigate their origins, assess the relative effectiveness and cost of different approaches to tackling them, and make recommendations for action. This type of work is currently very high profile, given the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Your work will have a large management and leadership element, and you'll be responsible for departmental budgets, managing staff, delivering core training and commissioning research projects.

How much can I earn?

As a specialist working at consultant level in the NHS, your salary will be between £105,504 and £139,882.

If you choose specialty training as a route to consultant level, you can expect to earn a salary of at least £49,909 during your training.

How about the benefits?

- making a difference
- flexible and part-time working
- high income early in your career
- working anywhere in the world
- excellent pension scheme
- good holiday entitlement

Must-have skills

- flexibility to cope with multiple and changing demands
- ability to meet tight deadlines
- high level of intellectual rigour
- political awareness, tact and diplomacy
- ability to understand a range of cultures
- ability to work across organisational and geographic boundaries
- ability to advise, challenge and advocate
- negotiation and motivation skills
- ability to influence without having direct authority.

The [Public Health Skills and Knowledge Framework \(PHSKF\)](#) ^[8] describes the functions and activities carried out by people working to protect and promote the public's health across the UK.

Entry requirements

You can become a public health specialist from a wide variety of backgrounds including medicine, dentistry, nursing, research, teaching, science and environmental health.

The specialty training programme is open to non-medical and medical applicants. It usually lasts five years and you may be able to train part-time, for example, for health reasons or due to caring responsibilities. You will need to have one of the following:

- a first degree at 1st or 2:1
- a Master's or PhD
- a degree in medicine or equivalent medical qualification

What are my chances of starting a career in public health?

In 2024, there were 1508 applications for 105 NHS specialty training places.

How to become a public health specialist and consultant

To hold professional registration as a public health specialist, you'll need to go through an approved programme of study or a portfolio route. To be a consultant in public health, you must also hold a professional registration at public health specialist level with either the General Medical Council (GMC), the General Dental Council (GDC) or the UK Public Health Register (UKPHR) as appropriate.

See the [UKPHR](#) ^[9] and [Faculty of Public Health](#) ^[10] websites for more information on specialist registration.

Where a career as a public health specialist and consultant can take you

You could:

- specialise or conduct research in areas such as dental public health, infectious diseases and hazards ([epidemiology](#) ^[7]) or health improvement
- teach public health students or postgraduate students in training
- strategic and leadership positions
- get involved in research at universities, in the NHS or private sector

- **Live NHS vacancies**

You can see the latest NHS public health specialist vacancies below. Non-NHS vacancies are also available on the [Civil Service Careers website](#) ^[11] and on council, private and voluntary sector websites.

Find a vacancy

Enter your location or postcode

Show results within

Search

- **Public Health Consultant**

London, SE1 7NJ

Salary:

£99808.00 to £113803.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Consultant job \(opens in a new window\)](#)

^[12]

- **Consultant in Public Health/Consultant in Public Health Medicine**

County hall, OX1 1ND

Salary:

£91615.00 to £103835.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxfordshire County Council

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Public Health/Consultant in Public Health Medicine job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[13]

- **Consultant in Public Health**

London, SE1 7NJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Public Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[14]

- **Health Visitor - Specialist Public Health Practitioner**

Retford / Worksop, DN22 7XF

Salary:

£38682.00 to £46580.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Health Visitor - Specialist Public Health Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[15]

- **Consultant in Public Health Infection**

Bristol, BS1 6EH

Salary:

£91342.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

UK Health Security Agency

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Public Health Infection job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[16]

- **Public Health Assistant**

Folkestone, CT20 1SZ

Salary:

£24625.00 to £25674.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Assistant job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[17]

- **Public Health Researcher**

Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

Salary:

£46840.00 to £53602.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Public Health Wales

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Researcher job \(opens in a new window\)](#)

[18]

- **Principal Public Health Practitioner**

Mold or Llanfairfechan, CH7 1PZ

Salary:

£54550.00 to £61412.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Principal Public Health Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [19]

- **Public Health Intelligence Analyst**

Swindon, SN1 2JG

Salary:

£39513.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Swindon Borough Council

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Intelligence Analyst job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [20]

- **Senior Public Health Practitioner**

Cardiff, CF10 4EB

Salary:

£46840.00 to £53602.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Public Health Wales

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Public Health Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [21]

- **Deputy Director of Public Health**

Port Talbot, SA12 7BR

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Swansea Bay University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Deputy Director of Public Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[22]

- **HCP 0-19 Public Health Practitioner**

Huntingdon, PE29 7HN

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for HCP 0-19 Public Health Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[23]

- ***INTERNAL MPFT APPS* Public Health 0-19 Practitioner - Health Visitor**

Lichfield, WS13 7HT

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for *INTERNAL MPFT APPS* Public Health 0-19 Practitioner - Health Visitor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[24]

- **Public Health Assistant -Early Years 0-5 years**

Tunbridge Wells, TN2 5HU

Salary:

£24625.00 to £25674.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Assistant -Early Years 0-5 years job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[25]

- **Mental Health Specialist Practitioner**

London, SW6 1RX

Salary:

£51883.00 to £58544.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

London Ambulance Service NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Mental Health Specialist Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[26]

- **Mental Health Specialist Practitioner**

London, SE18 4LP

Salary:

£53751.00 to £60651.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

London Ambulance Service NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Mental Health Specialist Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[27]

- **Health Play Specialist**

317 Trustwide, NE1 4LP

Salary:

£27485.00 to £30162.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Health Play Specialist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[28]

- **Specialist Physiotherapist - Specialist Pelvic Health**

Burton, DE14 3NT

Salary:

£38682.00 to £46580.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Physiotherapist - Specialist Pelvic Health job](#)

[\(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[29]

- **Specialist Physiotherapist Occupational Health**

Sheffield, S5 7AU

Salary:

£38682.00 to £46580.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Physiotherapist Occupational Health job](#)

[\(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[30]

- **Specialist Mental Health Physiotherapist**

Newark on Trent, NG24 4DE

Salary:

£38682.00 to £46580.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Mental Health Physiotherapist job \(opens in](#)

[a new window\)](#) ^[31]

- **Young Adults Service Mental Health Specialist Practitioner**

Gloucester, GL1 2EB

Salary:

£47810.00 to £54710.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Young Adults Service Mental Health Specialist](#)

[Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[32]

- **Bank Specialist Physiotherapist - Women's Health**

Elland, HX5 9EB

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Spire Healthcare Ltd
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Bank Specialist Physiotherapist - Women's Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[33]

- **ARRS Specialist Mental Health Practitioner**

Poole, BH18 8EE

Salary:

£47810.00 to £54710.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ARRS Specialist Mental Health Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[34]

- **Infant Feeding Specialist Health Visitor**

London, BR1 5EP

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Infant Feeding Specialist Health Visitor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[35]

- **Informatics Clinical Health Care Specialist**

Carmarthen, SA31 3BB

Salary:

£48527.00 to £55532.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Hywel Dda University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Informatics Clinical Health Care Specialist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[36]

- **Advanced Specialist Mental Health Pharmacist**

Reading, RG30 4EJ

Salary:

£46148.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent
Employer:
Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Advanced Specialist Mental Health Pharmacist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[37]

- **ARRS Specialist Mental Health Practitioner**

Wareham, BH20 4PG

Salary:
£23905.00 to £27355.00

Type:
Permanent

Employer:
Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ARRS Specialist Mental Health Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[38]

- **Locum Consultant Occupational Health Physician**

Oxford, OX3 9DU

Salary:
£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:
Locum

Employer:
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Occupational Health Physician job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[39]

- **Consultant Mental Health Liaison - Bolton**

Farnworth, Bolton, BL4 0JR

Salary:
£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:
Permanent

Employer:
Greater Manchester Mental Health NHSFT
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Mental Health Liaison - Bolton job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[40]

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Specialist Practitioner**

Cambridge, CB2 0QQ

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Mental Health and Wellbeing Specialist Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[41]

- **Specialist Occupational Therapist - Adult Mental Health**

Truro, TR1 2RA

Salary:

£31049.00 to £46580.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Occupational Therapist - Adult Mental Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[42]

- **Specialist Clinical Pharmacist in Mental Health**

Shrewsbury, SY3 8DS

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Clinical Pharmacist in Mental Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[43]

- **Health Play Specialist Team Coordinator/Leader**

London, SE5 9RS

Salary:

£46419.00 to £55046.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Health Play Specialist Team Coordinator/Leader job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[44]

- **Specialist Physiotherapist-Surrey Downs Health & Care**

Epsom, KT18 7EG

Salary:

£53751.00 to £60651.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Physiotherapist-Surrey Downs Health & Care job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[45]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist, Mental Health Rehabilitation, Wesham**

Wesham, PR4 3HA

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist, Mental Health Rehabilitation, Wesham job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[46]

- **Consultant in Genitourinary Medicine / Sexual Health**

Rotherham, S60 2UD

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Genitourinary Medicine / Sexual Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[47]

- **Band 7 Specialist Occupational Therapist – Mental health**

Coventry, CV2 2TE

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 7 Specialist Occupational Therapist – Mental health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[48]

- **Specialist Pharmacist Inpatient Mental Health - Northwest Sussex**

Crawley, RH11 7EJ

Salary:

£47810.00 to £54710.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Pharmacist Inpatient Mental Health - Northwest Sussex job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[49]

• Further information

These organisations have further information about being a public health specialist or consultant, particularly as your career progresses. Take a look.

- [Faculty of Public Health](#) ^[50]
- [Faculty of Public Health job descriptions](#) ^[51]
- [Public Health Register](#) ^[52]
- [British Society of Community Dentistry \(BASCD\)](#) ^[53]
- [General Dental Council – Specialist Lists](#) ^[54]

Other roles that may interest you

- [Public health knowledge and intelligence professional](#) ^[55]
- [Public health manager](#) ^[56]
- [Dentist](#) ^[57]
- [Director of public health](#) ^[58]

Partner logos

Faculty of Public Health ^[50]

Local Government Association ^[59]

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Links

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<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Epidemiology> [8]
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/public-health-skills-and-knowledge-framework> [9]
<https://ukphr.org/overview-of-public-health/> [10] <https://www.fph.org.uk/training-careers/specialty-training/>
[11] <https://www.civil-service-careers.gov.uk/> [12] <https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9196-25-1329> [13] <https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/F0069-25-0044> [14]
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<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9846-25-0495> [26]
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9308-25-0065> [27]
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9308-25-0067> [28]
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