

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 £99,532 and £131,964.

If you choose specialty training as a route to consultant level, you can expect to earn a salary of at least £43,923 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 2023, there were 1258 applications for 124 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

- **Consultant in Public Health**

South Shields, NE34 0PL

Salary:

£88168.00 to £101677.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Public Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[12]

- **Consultant Midwife Public Health**

London, E1 1FR

Salary:

£70387.00 to £93773.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Barts Health NHS Trust

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

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

Carlton, NG4 3DQ

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

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

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

Retford / Worksop, DN22 7XF

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

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]

- **Specialist Community Public Health Practitioner – Health Visitor**

Thatcham, RG18 3AS

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Community Public Health Practitioner – Health Visitor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[16]

- **Public Health Practitioner**

Brecon, LD3 0LY

Salary:

£37898.00 to £45637.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Powys Teaching Health Board

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

- **Public Health Research Assistant**

Cardiff / Wrexham, CF10 4BZ

Salary:

£30420.00 to £37030.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Public Health Wales

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Research Assistant job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[18]

- **Public Health Programme Manager**

Cardiff, CF14 4HH

Salary:

£46840.00 to £53602.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

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

- **Senior Public Health Practitioner**

Bronllys, LD3 0LY

Salary:

£46840.00 to £53602.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Powys Teaching Health Board

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

- **Principal Public Health Practitioner**

Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

Salary:

£54550.00 to £61412.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Public Health Wales

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

- **Community Public Health Associate**

Oxford, OX3 9RF

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxford Health NHS Trust

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

- **Public Health Intelligence Analyst**

London, N1 1XR

Salary:

£42861.00 to £49638.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

London Borough of Islington

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Intelligence Analyst job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[23]

- **Public Health Research Assistant**

CARDIFF, CF10 4BZ

Salary:

£30420.00 to £37030.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Public Health Wales

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Research Assistant job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[24]

- **0-19 Public Health Support Worker**

Warrington, WA1 1UG

Salary:

£23615.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for 0-19 Public Health Support Worker job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[25]

- **Pelvic Health Specialist**

Birkenhead, CH420LQ

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust

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

[26]

- **Information and Records Manager, Archives and Public Records**

London, E14 5EA

Salary:

£40661.00 to £50472.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

UK Health Security Agency

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Information and Records Manager, Archives and Public Records job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [27]

- **Women's Health Consultant**

Point Pleasant, SW18 1LR

Salary:

£40.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Dr Karen's Women's Health Service

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Women's Health Consultant job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [28]

- **Health Play Specialist**

Carshalton, SM5 1AA

Salary:

£31081.00 to £33665.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Health Play Specialist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[29]

- **Specialist Health Visitor in Infant Mental Health**

Southampton, SO30 3JB

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Health Visitor in Infant Mental Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[30]

- **Mental Health Specialist Liaison Practitioner**

Hull, HU3 2RW

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Mental Health Specialist Liaison Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[31]

- **Senior Physiotherapist - Pelvic Health Specialist**

Exeter, EX2 4UG

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nuffield Health

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Physiotherapist - Pelvic Health Specialist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[32]

- **Specialist Occupational Health Physiotherapist**

Blackburn, BB2 3HH

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Occupational Health Physiotherapist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[33]

- **Senior Health Play Specialist**

LONDON, SE5 9RS

Salary:

£35964.00 to £43780.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Specialist Mental Health Pharmacist**

Sheffield, S11 9BF

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Health Improvement Practitioner Specialist - PSHE**

Manchester, M22 4PJ

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Health Improvement Practitioner Specialist - PSHE job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[36]

- **Specialist Psychologist (Autism & Mental Health)**

Sidcup - London, DA14 6LT

Salary:

£51883.00 to £58544.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Psychologist \(Autism & Mental Health\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[37]

- **Consultant Paediatrician - Community Child Health**

Colchester, CO4 9YQ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Provide CIC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Paediatrician - Community Child Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[38]

- **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 \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[39]

- **Highly Specialist Clinical Pharmacist - Womens Health**

Wigan, WN1 2NN

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Wrightington Wigan & Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Highly Specialist Clinical Pharmacist - Womens Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[40]

- **Specialist Psychiatrist in Community Mental Health**

Hartlepool, TS24 7DX

Salary:

£96990.00 to £107155.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Specialist Occupational Therapy Technician: Mental Health**

Ammanford, SA18 3AS

Salary:

£26928.00 to £29551.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hywel Dda University Health Board

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

- **Specialist Pharmacist – Community Mental Health Services**

London, SE8 4AT

Salary:

£61927.00 to £68676.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

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

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

Truro, TR1 2RA

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Occupational Therapist - Adult Mental Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[44]

- **Consultant Practitioner Psychologist - Child Health Psychology**

Cardiff, CF14 4XW

Salary:

£75405.00 to £86885.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Practitioner Psychologist - Child Health Psychology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[45]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist (Mental Health Access Team)**

Winsford, CW7 2AS

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **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](#) ^[47]
- [Faculty of Public Health job descriptions](#) ^[48]
- [Public Health Register](#) ^[49]
- [British Society of Community Dentistry \(BASCD\)](#) ^[50]
- [General Dental Council – Specialist Lists](#) ^[51]

Other roles that may interest you

- [Public health knowledge and intelligence professional](#) ^[52]
- [Public health manager](#) ^[53]
- [Dentist](#) ^[54]
- [Director of public health](#) ^[55]

Partner logos

Faculty of Public Health ^[47]

Local Government Association ^[56]

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