

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 £84,559 and £114,003.

If you choose specialty training as a route to consultant level, you can expect to earn a salary of at least £39,467 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 2020, there were 933 applications for 77 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
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**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

○

Consultant in Public Health

Cardiff, CF10 4BX

Salary:

£101390.00 to £116673.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Public Health Wales

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

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Locum Public Health Consultant – MHLDA Collaborative

Leeds, LS7 3JX

Salary:

£93666.00 to £126281.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Public Health Consultant – MHLDA Collaborative job (opens in a new window) [13]

○

Specialist Public Health Practitioner (Health Visitor)

Mansfield, NG183SF

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

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

○

Health Visitor - Specialist Public Health Practitioner

Hucknall,, NG15 7JX

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

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)

[15]

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Health Visitor - Specialist Public Health Practitioner

Carlton, NG4 3DQ

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

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) [16]

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Highly Specialist Public Health Dietitian

TBC, CF48 1BZ

Salary:

£44398.00 to £50807.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Highly Specialist Public Health Dietitian job (opens in a new window) [17]

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Consultant in Public Health Health Protection and HCPH

Warwick, CV34 4RL

Salary:

£84443.00 to £92312.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Warwickshire County Council

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Public Health Health Protection and HCPH job (opens in a new window) [18]

○

Public Health Midwife

Hereford, HR1 2ER

Salary:

£43742.00 to £50056.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Wye Valley NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Midwife job (opens in a new window) [19]

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Public Health Practitioner

Cardiff, CF14 4HH

Salary:

£35922.00 to £43257.00

Type:

Secondment

Employer:

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

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

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Public Health Nutritionist

Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

Salary:

£35922.00 to £43257.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Public Health Wales

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Nutritionist job (opens in a new window) [21]

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Public Health Lead

Lewes, BN7 1EA

Salary:

£42000.00 to £49726.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Lead job (opens in a new window) [22]

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Specialist Community Public Health Student (School Health) - Sept 24

Trafford,, M32 0TH

Salary:

£28407.00 to £34581.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Community Public Health Student (School Health) - Sept 24 job (opens in a new window) [23]

○

Senior Public Health Strategist

London, E17 4JF

Salary:

£56172.00 to £59328.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Public Health Strategist job (opens in a new window) [24]

○

Senior Public Health Practitioner

Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

Salary:

£44398.00 to £50807.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Public Health Wales

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Public Health Practitioner job (opens in a new window) [25]

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Public Health Support Worker

Warrington, WA5 3AA

Salary:

£22383.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Support Worker job (opens in a new window) [26]

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Public Health Manager (Health Intelligence Analyst)

Woolwich, SE18 6HQ

Salary:

£49083.00 to £52116.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Borough of Greenwich

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Manager (Health Intelligence Analyst) job (opens in a new window) [27]

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Executive Director of Public Health

St Asaph, LL17 0JU

Salary:

£125032.00 to £129738.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Executive Director of Public Health job (opens in a new window) [28]

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FW&E Lead Public Health Microbiologist

York, Porton Down or London, NW9 5HT

Salary:

£65302.00 to £78805.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

UK Health Security Agency

Apply now on NHS Jobs for FW&E Lead Public Health Microbiologist job (opens in a new window) [29]

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HCP 0-19 Public Health Practitioner

Cambridge, CB1 3DF

Salary:

£28407.00 to £34581.00

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) [30]

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National Speciality Advisor - Obstetrics (Public Health)

National, LS2 7UE

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Secondment

Employer:

NHS England

Apply now on NHS Jobs for National Speciality Advisor - Obstetrics (Public Health) job (opens in a new window) [31]

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0-19 Specialist Infant Feeding Community Public Health Practitioner HV

Sheffield, S10 2TH

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for 0-19 Specialist Infant Feeding Community Public Health Practitioner HV job (opens in a new window) [32]

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Head of Public Health Commissioning Strategy & Operations

Fulbourn, CB21 5BX

Salary:

£83571.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

NHS England

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Head of Public Health Commissioning Strategy & Operations job (opens in a new window) [33]

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Senior Campaigns and Public Affairs Manager

London, SE1 2TZ

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

NHS South East London Integrated Care Board

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Campaigns and Public Affairs Manager job (opens in a new window) [34]

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Deputy Head of Communications and Campaigns (Public Affairs and Media)

London, N1 1TH

Salary:

£66718.00 to £76271.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

North Central London Integrated Care Board

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Deputy Head of Communications and Campaigns (Public Affairs and Media) job (opens in a new window) [35]

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Mental Health Specialist Practitioner

Kirkby In Ashfield, NG17 7AG

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Mental Health Specialist Practitioner job (opens in a new window) [36]

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Health Improvement Specialist

Torquay, TQ2 7AA

Salary:

£43742.00 to £50056.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Health Improvement Specialist job (opens in a new window) [37]

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LD/ASC Mental Health Specialist

Runcorn, WA7 5HQ

Salary:

£43742.00 to £50056.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for LD/ASC Mental Health Specialist job (opens in a new window) [38]

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Health & Safety Specialist Adviser

Wakefield, WF1 3SP

Salary:

£43742.00 to £50056.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Health & Safety Specialist Adviser job (opens in a new window) [39]

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Sexual Health Promotion Specialist

Brighton, BN2 5BE

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (279)

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Sexual Health Promotion Specialist job (opens in a new window) [40]

○

Specialist Mental Health Practitioner

Nottingham, NG7 6LB

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

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

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Specialist Mental Health Pharmacist

Derby, DE22 3LZ

Salary:

£35392.00 to £50056.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Mental Health Pharmacist job (opens in a new window) [42]

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**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 [43]
- Faculty of Public Health job descriptions [44]
- Public Health Register [45]
- British Society of Community Dentistry (BASCD) [46]

Other roles that may interest you

- Public health knowledge and intelligence professional [48]
- Public health manager [49]
- Dentist [50]
- Director of public health [51]

Partner logos

Faculty of Public Health

[43]

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Local Government Association

[52]

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