

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**

Leicester, LE3 8RA

Salary:

£82180.00 to £93413.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Leicestershire County Council

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

^[12]

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

Carmarthen and working from home, SA31 3BB

Salary:

£106000.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hywel Dda University Health Board

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

- **Consultant In Public Health**

Darlington, DL3 6HX

Durham, DH1 5TW

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Consultant in Public Health**

Newport, PO301UD

Salary:

£75099.00 to £80992.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Isle of Wight Council

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

- **Highly Specialist Public Health Dietitian**

To Be Confirmed, CF481BZ

Salary:

£46840.00 to £53602.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

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

- **Public Health Practitioner**

Merthyr Tydfil, CF481BZ

Salary:

£37898.00 to £45637.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

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

- **Specialist Public Health Practitioner: School Nursing**

Mansfield, NG18 5QJ

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Public Health Practitioner: School Nursing job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[18]

- **Bank Highly Specialist Public Health Dietitian**

Pontypridd, CF37 4AL

Salary:

£46840.00 to £53602.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Bank Highly Specialist Public Health Dietitian job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[19]

- **Director of Public Health**

Truro, TR1 3AY

Salary:

£87645.00 to £122911.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cornwall Council

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

- **Service Manager - Public Health**

Croydon, CR7 7YE

Salary:

£51883.00 to £58544.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Croydon Health Services NHS Trust

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

- **Strategic Health Improvement Development Manager, Public Health**

Mold / Llanfairfechan, CH7 1PZ

Salary:

£63150.00 to £73379.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Strategic Health Improvement Development Manager, Public Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[22]

- **Public health lead - healthy behaviours**

Hereford, HR4 0LE

Salary:

£44711.00 to £48710.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Herefordshire Council

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public health lead - healthy behaviours job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[23]

- **Public Health Services & Acute Bacteriology Manager**

Birmingham, B9 5SS

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

UK Health Security Agency

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Services & Acute Bacteriology Manager job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[24]

- **Public Health Nursing Infant Feeding Lead**

Bromley, BR60JA

Salary:

£51883.00 to £58544.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Bromley Healthcare CIC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Public Health Nursing Infant Feeding Lead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[25]

- **Principal Public Health Practitioner - Substance Use**

Merthyr Tydfil, CF481BZ

Salary:

£54550.00 to £61412.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Principal Public Health Practitioner - Substance Use job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[26]

- **Senior Communications Manager (public affairs)**

Hampstead, NW3 2QG

Salary:

£54320.00 to £60981.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Communications Manager \(public affairs\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[27]

- **Pelvic Health Specialist Physiotherapist**

Salisbury, SP2 8BJ

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Pelvic Health Specialist Physiotherapist**

Chelmsford, CM1 7ET

Salary:

£37338.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Forensic Mental Health Specialist**

London, SE1 7LP

Salary:

£51883.00 to £58544.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

North London NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Specialist Health Visitor - Homeless Health Visitor**

London, SW18 4DU

Salary:

£54320.00 to £60981.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Central London Community Health Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Health Visitor - Homeless Health Visitor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[31]

- **Health Play Specialist**

London, WC1N 3JH

Salary:

£31944.00 to £34937.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Oral Health Promotion Specialist**

Wolverhampton, WV3 0JH

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Oral Health Promotion Specialist 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 Paramedic Mental Health**

South Yorkshire & Hull/East Riding, S6 1TN

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust

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

- **Consultant in Health Protection**

Manchester, M1 3BN

Salary:

£88168.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

UK Health Security Agency

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Health Protection job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[36]

- **0669 - Lead Occupational Health Specialist Practitioner**

Rotherham, S60 2UD
Barnsley, S75 2EP

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for 0669 - Lead Occupational Health Specialist Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[37]

- **Senior Specialist Dietitian Women's Health**

London, SE1 7EH

Salary:

£54320.00 to £60981.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Specialist Dietitian Women's Health job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[38]

- **Specialist Mental Health Practitioner - Neurodiversity**

Torquay, TQ2 7BA
Dartington, TQ9 6JE

Salary:

£46418.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Devon Partnership NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Mental Health Practitioner - Neurodiversity job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[39]

- **ARRS Specialist Mental Health Practitioner**

Bournemouth, BH3 7AT

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

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](#)) ^[40]

- **ARRS Specialist Mental Health Practitioner**

Verwood, BH31 6EH

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **CAMHS Specialist Mental Health Practitioner**

Erith, DA8 3EE

Salary:

£51883.00 to £58544.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for CAMHS Specialist Mental Health Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[42]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist Mental Health Liaison**

Hereford, HR1 2ER

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist Mental Health Liaison job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[43]

- **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 \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[44]

- **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 \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[45]

- **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](#) ^[46]
- [Faculty of Public Health job descriptions](#) ^[47]
- [Public Health Register](#) ^[48]
- [British Society of Community Dentistry \(BASCD\)](#) ^[49]
- [General Dental Council – Specialist Lists](#) ^[50]

Other roles that may interest you

- [Public health knowledge and intelligence professional](#) ^[51]
- [Public health manager](#) ^[52]
- [Dentist](#) ^[53]
- [Director of public health](#) ^[54]

Partner logos

[Faculty of Public Health](#) ^[46]

[Local Government Association](#) ^[55]

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Links

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