What is public health and who does it?

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4 Commonly Asked Questions

- What is Public Health?
- Why is public health important?
- Who does public health?
- What’s the future for public health?
4 Commonly Asked Questions

What is Public Health?
‘Public health’ ...

“the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society” (Acheson, 1988; WHO)

Three main 'domains':

| Health protection: Protecting people's health (e.g. from environmental or biological threats, such as food poisoning or radiation) | Health improvement: Improving people's health (for example by helping people quit smoking or improving their living conditions) | Healthcare public health: Ensuring that our health services are the most effective, most efficient and equally accessible |
The Story of Public Health in England

Edwin Chadwick (1800-1890)
- Report of the Poor Law Commission (1832)
- New Poor Law (1834)
- Public Health Act (1848)
  - Sanitary idea - misera theory
  - Drainage system
  - Central and local boards of health

The dawn of hope.

National Insurance:
- Sickness
- Disability

The prevention Green Paper: The right time to put it in its place?
kingsfund.org.uk/blog

Health and Social Care Act 2012

Inequalities in Health

The Black Report

Fair Society, Healthy Lives

The Kings Fund

The Kings Fund ⓒ 2019

The continued cuts to public health funding are short-sighted and at odds with the government's stated mantra that 'prevention is better than cure'.

Siko Muhando, Chief Analyst, The Kings Fund
The Story of Public Health in England

The continued cuts to public health funding are short-sighted and at odds with the government stated mantra that ‘prevention is better than cure’.  

Siko Foundation Chief Analyst, The King’s Fund
The Waves of Public Health

+ an emergent fifth wave?

LANCET, DAVIES ET AL. VOLUME 384, ISSUE 9957, P1889-1895, NOVEMBER 22, 2014
5 Key Principles ...

1. Health is not just about ill health
2. Wider determinants play a (bigger) part

..and they interact
5 Key Principles ...

1. Health is not just about ill health
2. Wider determinants play a (bigger) part
3. They disproportionately affect certain groups – health inequalities

Despite many advances, “stubborn health inequalities persist across the country. It remains the case that people in the richest areas enjoy 19 more years in good health than those in the poorest”.

PHE, LGA and ADPH July 2019
Place Based Approaches to Reducing Health Inequalities
5 Key Principles …

1. Health is not just about ill health
2. Wider determinants play a (bigger) part
3. They disproportionately affect certain groups – health inequalities
4. Large modifiable component, cost effective, & key to a sustainable future

Coutersy of Professor Andrew Burnett 2018
5 Key Principles ...

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5 Key Principles ... 

1. Health is not just about ill health 
2. Wider determinants play a (bigger) part 
3. They disproportionately affect certain – health inequalities 
4. Large modifiable component, cost effective, & key to a sustainable future 
5. Requires dual focus on 

improving health and reducing inequalities
The importance of these principles is increasingly reflected in the rhetoric ...
Prevention rhetoric and reality ... needs to match
4 Commonly Asked Questions

What is Public Health?

Why is public health important?
Many Achievements …

• Many examples of great practice & impressive achievements:
  ❖ Smoking prevalence reaching all-time low
  ❖ Reductions in deaths from cardiovascular disease
  ❖ Decreased rates of teenage pregnancy
  ❖ Reduced number of new cases of TB
  ❖ Fewer infectious diseases
  ❖ Fluoride in drinking water
  ❖ Salt and sugar dietary regulation
  ❖ Teenage pregnancy
  ❖ Increased physical activity
  ❖ Drugs, alcohol and smoking reported rates
  ❖ Safer work conditions
  ❖ Better information about health improvement opportunities including inequalities mapping
  ❖ Public health leadership of population health and cross-systems efforts
Tremendous Resource

• Many tools and resources – just a few examples:
  • Public Health Outcomes Framework
  • Fingertips
  • Atlas of Variation
  • RightCare
  • Return on Investment Tools
  • Factsheets
  • Training & support

• And of course – Public Health Staff
  Skills, knowledge, connections, experience –
  very relevant for current and future aspirations of the health and care system
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Public Health staff ...

40,000 people in England work in roles where public health is identified as being the main part of the role.

Relatively small but very important part of the health and care system.

Wide presence, Big impact.
Director of Public Health & teams

• Every local authority has to appoint a Director of Public Health – this is a legal requirement. 134 across 152 LAs.

• The DPH is responsible for
  - ensuring public health is at the heart of the local authority’s agenda
  - Produce a detailed analysis of the needs of their local population and publish this annually (part of Joint Strategic Needs Assessment process)
  - Using evidence to shape a vision for meeting local needs
  - Work with partners to deliver objectives for meeting these needs
  - Report annually on their activities

• Public Health teams include consultants, strategists, data analysts, managers and more. DPH role varied and so are teams. Public health teams can also be in NHS, academia, education, charities, consultancy and many other sectors.
Public Health England

• Executive agency of Department of Health and Social Care
• Distinct organisation with operational autonomy.
• 5,500 staff (full-time equivalent), mostly scientists, researchers and public health professionals.
• Evidence-based professional, scientific expertise & support for local & national government, NHS, industry & public.

“We exist to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities”

Work of PHE includes:
• promoting healthier lifestyles
• protecting nation from public health hazards
• preparing for & responding to emergencies
• whole population information & support
• identify and preparing for future challenges
• support LA & NHS plan and provide H&SC services (eg imm & screening programmes)
• helping develop public health system & specialist workforce
• gathering and analysing data to better understand public health challenges & solutions
Public Health Training & Revalidation

• For Any Member of the Public Health Team:
  • Public Health Practitioner Scheme
  • RSPH Level 1 & 2 Qualifications
  • Public Health Skills & Knowledge Framework -

• Consultants & Directors of Public Health
  • 5 year training programme
    (see FPH website: https://www.fph.org.uk/training-careers/specialty-training/)
  • Annual revalidation and appraisal
  • Ongoing professional development
5 Year Programme

- MSc in Public Health + MFPH + Demonstrate Level Across 10 Key Areas, 100 Competencies

![Public Health Training Pathway]

- Data & evidence
- Policy & strategy
- Wider determinants
- Health Protection
- Healthcare public health
- Integrated working
- Health improvement
- System Leadership
- Academic public health
- Partnership working

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<th>2018: 76 posts</th>
<th>Eligible</th>
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<tr>
<td>Medics (not in FT)</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medics (FT)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other professional</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12%</td>
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RSPH & CfWI estimated that there are approximately **15 million people in England employed in occupations that have the opportunity or ability to impact health and wellbeing through their work. (ONS, 2014)**

For example ...

- **172,686 Allied Health Professionals** (AHPs) e.g. physiotherapists and podiatrists
- **292,000 Protective service occupations** including fire service, police, ambulance
- **243,000 Welfare and housing professionals**
- **72,985 Pharmacists and their teams**
- **803,000 kitchen, bar and waitering staff**
- **639,000 cleaners**
- **452,000 public service and associate professionals** such as postal workers
- **222,000 hairdressers and related services**

Huge opportunity & relatively untapped area, being explored

Free virtual conference 18th Sep
4 Commonly Asked Questions

What is Public Health?

Who does public health?

Why is public health important?

What’s the future for public health?
Public Health is key to a healthier future:

- **Policy Makers and Funders** – Rhetoric is in the right direction, actions need to follow. Funding is critical to this – needs to be prioritised...

- **System Level** – Public Health is a big asset. 1. Ensure teams are at the table for work on ICS, STP, PCN. 2. Put population health at the centre of your agenda. 3. Focus on health outcomes AND inequalities. 4. Many people contribute. This approach is working across parts of the country already - Eg Coventry, GM, C&M.

- **Workforce & Skills** – much untapped opportunity: 1) the wider workforce. 2) System Leadership – e.g. Leadership for Population Health. 3) Connecting more across the system (eg HEE & PHE work in London).

- **Digital & Innovation** – PHE Hub offers opportunity, learning from across UK and internationally (anchor, devolution, cities and health) for transformation

- **Needs Everyone’s Input to Bring About a Healthier Future** – what role do we each play for this? What can others contribute? We looking more into this too.
Thank you

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