



NEW ZEALAND COLLEGE  
OF PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICINE

# Employing a Public Health Medicine Registrar

## Public Health Medicine Registrars

## Benefits of employing a PHMR

**Public health medicine specialists (PHMS) who practise in New Zealand are doctors who contribute to the overall health of our population rather than focusing on individual health needs.** The medical specialty of public health builds strong foundations for health and wellbeing for all, using data analysis and evidence to identify options to address issues affecting the health of the population.

Public health medicine registrars (PHMR) are registered medical doctors, who are training to become specialists in the field of public health medicine. Before applying to become a registrar, an applicant must have had at least two years' post-graduate experience. After acceptance to the programme, the registrar undertakes 16 months full-time equivalent (FTE) basic training, which includes a Master of Public Health degree with a dissertation on a public health topic. On completion of basic training, they enter advanced training which consists of supervised employment at a minimum of three accredited training sites, one of which must be a Public Health Unit.

Employing a PHMR can prove to be a very cost-effective method of introducing a highly-trained and motivated member to a project team or work-place.

**Projects undertaken by PHMR in workplaces vary widely. Some examples from the past few years have included:**

- A service review, including process mapping, data analysis and development of evidence-based recommendations, for a transition from hospital to aged residential care project.
- A review of the literature to provide background and context to a potential smoking cessation and safe sleep initiative for Pacific women.
- Undertaking a root cause analysis and participating in an investigation team for an incident / protocol deviation and writing up the report.
- Undertaking an equity audit of contracts awarded in procurement processes.
- Examining the clinical drivers of increased demand for a new neo-natal unit.
- Creating budgetary and patient flow models to determine impact on a new model of case on workload and workforce requirements.

Employers appreciate PHMRs for their high work-rate, clinical medical experience, and ability to think through complex problems.

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For more information about public health medicine or public health medicine registrars (PHMR), contact the NZCPHM.

04 472 9183 | [education@nzcphm.org.nz](mailto:education@nzcphm.org.nz) | [www.nzcphm.org.nz](http://www.nzcphm.org.nz)

## PHMR Placements

Registrar placements are normally for six months to twelve months (FTE) but may differ in individual cases. Registrars are employed by the organisation at which they are working, and the organisation is responsible for salary and benefits, including leave arrangements. Registrars may work less than full time, to a minimum of 0.4FTE, to be arranged with the employing organisation.

New Zealand-based organisations receive an endowment payment from the College, with funding from Health Workforce. The value of the endowment is \$2,033 (excl. GST) per month for a full-time registrar (pro-rated for part-time training). The endowment recognises the time commitment of the workplace supervisor, PHMR absences from the workplace to attend education sessions, and general workplace expenses involved in taking on a new employee.

Funding may be available through MFAT for training sites in Polynesian Pacific countries.

I totally recommend to all potential employers the major value they will derive from providing placements for public health registrars. Over the years I have had the pleasure of working with a number of registrars. They have all been very enthusiastic, extremely hardworking, focused, totally reliable in completing their projects on time, and willingly provided assistance to other staff members across a variety of areas.

Associate Professor Barry Borman

## Requirements

In addition to involvement in workplace projects and activities, registrars are expected to give oral presentations, chair meetings, and undertake multi-source appraisals as part of their training and well as submission of three written project reports over the course of their training. They attend Registrar-led training days once a month and College-led training days three to four times a year. There is an exam towards the end of the registrar's training time which they must prepare for.

Organisations employing a registrar are required to be accredited by the NZCPHM as a provider. The accreditation process is not onerous, and is an assessment of the ability of a training site to support PHMR achievement of competencies and provide a quality training environment.

In most cases, there must be a Workplace Supervisor (who is a PHMS) on site to guide, teach and supervise the registrars, although in some cases arrangements can be made for an onsite workplace trainer (who is not required to be a PHMS) to work alongside an offsite workplace supervisor.

PHMR must also obtain workplace approval before beginning work at a training site to ensure that the site will provide learning opportunities that are appropriate to their learning needs.

**Further information about the programme and the site accreditation process can be found on our website: <https://www.nzcphm.org.nz>**

## Examples of workplaces that have employed PHMR in the last 10 years

Public Health Units  
DHB Planning and Funding units  
Ministry of Health (e.g. Office of the Director of Public Health, National Screening Unit)  
Health Quality and Safety Commission  
National Heart Foundation  
Office of the Children's Commissioner  
Public Health Association

SafeKids New Zealand  
Centre for Public Health Research  
Environmental Science and Research  
NZ Child Youth Epidemiology Services  
Central Primary Health Organisation  
Pegasus Health  
Institute for Innovation and Improvement  
University Medical Schools