

# New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine

## Information for Public Health Medicine Registrars

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## Introduction

The New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine (NZCPHM, the College) conducts training and assessment to qualify medical graduates as Public Health Medicine Specialists and Fellows of the College.

The College's training programme is accredited by Te Kaunihera Rata o Aotearoa | Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ, Medical Council) and overseen by the College's Education and Training Committee. Admission to Fellowship certifies the medical graduate as trained and qualified to work as an independent practitioner in the practice of Public Health Medicine in New Zealand.

This document provides potential Public Health Medicine registrars with information about the administration and operation of the Public Health Medicine Training Programme.

## Training Programme

The training programme involves three years and nine months (195 weeks) Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of study or up to four years and two months for registrars who choose to complete their MPH over four semesters. Training is full-time and continuous, except by application for part-time training or leave from the programme. All training requirements, including assessments, must be completed within ten years of commencement of training. Any time credited in recognition of prior learning will be deducted from the ten-year time limit.

The training programme has two phases, Basic Training and Advanced Training.

The minimum a registrar may train at is 0.5 FTE in Basic Training and 0.4 FTE in Advanced Training.

**Basic training** requires 16-21 months (69-91 weeks) FTE study to enable a registrar to undertake a formal university qualification in public health. (Commencing with the 2026 registrar intake, funding is available for up to 21 months for registrars who wish to complete their MPH in the usual university timeframe i.e. four semesters.) The study grant is not available during a period of interrupted training. To be eligible for the study grant over the university break from December to February registrars will need to meet conditions agreed with the College.

The qualification approved for basic training is the Master of Public Health degree offered by both the University of Auckland and the University of Otago. Details about prescribed core and recommended optional papers are available in the Training Curriculum. In addition, registrars are required to participate in training events, submit reports and attend supervisory meetings with their Training Programme Supervisor.

Note: Registrars are not required to hold a practising certificate with the Medical Council while studying for the MPH unless they intend on practising medicine alongside their studies.

**Advanced Training** (29 months / 126 weeks FTE) requires a registrar to be employed in a minimum of three training sites, usually for a minimum of six months at each. During these placements registrars undertake a combination of service work plus specific project work. Advanced Training involves continuous review and support from workplace supervisors (WPS) and Training Programme Supervisors (TPS). Refer to the Training Curriculum for full details.

Accredited worksites for training are organised into three categories and registrars are expected to train at one worksite from each:

- a placement working alongside a Medical Officer of Health in a local office of the National Public Health Service – this is a compulsory placement for a minimum of six months FTE.

- central health sector organisations, which offer other positions in the National Public Health Service, and Te Whatu Ora, Manatū Hauora, and crown entities (such as Health Quality & Safety Commission).
- worksites which either focus on community engagement and local delivery or are non-health sector organisations or government agencies. These include Māori and Pacific providers, and others that work with Primary Health Organisations, localities, and local government. Universities also fall into this category.

It is not always possible for registrars to be accommodated in their preferred location for advanced training (including the compulsory training placement in the National Public Health Service). As such, registrars may need to move to another geographic location to take up a training position or may need to request a period of interrupted training until they can secure a suitable advanced training placement.

During Basic and Advanced Training, registrars have access to ongoing training activities such as College-led training days and virtual training sessions.

## Applying for Training

The minimum entry requirements for medical practitioners wishing to apply for Public Health Medicine training are listed on the College website.

Application requires the submission of a short reflection on why public health medicine is the applicant's chosen career, a curriculum vitae, and certified copies of relevant certificates. From this information, applicants are short-listed and invited for interview. Applicants will need to demonstrate some understanding and knowledge of public health at interview. Successful applicants will be offered a position on the Training Programme subject to receipt of a satisfactory Certificate of Professional Status from the Medical Council and any other regulatory body that they have been registered with within the last five years.

For successful applicants, training usually begins in March of the following year.

Applicants wishing to dual train in Public Health and another scope are advised to contact the College to discuss the options available.

Applications for exemption from basic training (i.e. direct entry to advance training) will be considered by the College's Assessment Panel and may be granted for candidates who already hold an MPH. The standard application process applies.

## Credit for Prior Learning

The College has established policy and processes with respect to awarding credit for prior learning and achievement towards both Basic and Advanced Training.

A candidate can apply for a recognition of prior learning assessment before applying to the NZCPHM training programme.

A registrar can apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), upon acceptance into the training programme or no later than six calendar months after commencement of the programme.

Contact the College for more information.

## **Funding Terms and Conditions**

The Public Health Medicine Training Programme (the programme) is funded by Te Whatu Ora | Health New Zealand: the terms and conditions for the provision of registrar funding assistance reflect these contractual arrangements. The registrar's relationship with the NZCPHM is contractual and the provision of the study grant during basic training is subject to the ongoing funding for the programme and a registrar's ongoing compliance with training requirements. In this regard a registrar is not an employee of the College and as such is not entitled to e.g. KiwiSaver, paid parental leave or ACC claims.

## **Communications**

The College publishes a monthly newsletter featuring updates on College policies and public health items of interest. The College website also provides training information and resources, as well as details about College events and current job vacancies.

## **Privacy and Confidentiality**

Any personal information provided by registrars and Fellows is strictly confidential to College staff, members of relevant College committees, examiners and supervisors. Registrars are asked upon application to the Training Programme consent to the NZCPHM providing relevant and necessary information to the appropriate personnel and authorities to enable compliance with all statutory and policy obligations.

## **College Contacts**

For more information visit [www.nzcpm.org.nz](http://www.nzcpm.org.nz) or email [education@nzcpm.org.nz](mailto:education@nzcpm.org.nz).