



# Employing a Public Health Medicine Registrar

## Public Health Medicine Registrars

Registrars complete 16–21 months of full-time equivalent basic training, which includes a Master of Public Health degree and a dissertation on a public health topic.

After successfully completing basic training, registrars progress to advanced training. This phase involves supervised practice across a minimum of three accredited training sites, including at least one National Public Health Service (NPHS), ensuring a broad and practical foundation for future specialist practice.

**Public health medicine specialists (PHMS) practising in New Zealand are medical doctors dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of the population as a whole, rather than focusing solely on individual patient care.**

This specialty uses data, research, and evidence-based strategies to identify, understand, and address factors that influence population health, helping to build strong foundations for healthier communities.

## Benefits of employing a PHMR

Employing a Public Health Medicine Registrar (PHMR) can be a highly cost-effective way to introduce a skilled, motivated, and analytically minded team member into your organisation or project. PHMRs bring strong clinical experience, a robust understanding of public health principles, and the ability to contribute meaningfully to complex projects.

**Projects undertaken by PHMR vary widely depending on organisational needs. Examples from recent years includes:**

Conducting service reviews—including process mapping, data analysis, and evidence-based recommendations—for initiatives such as improving transitions from hospital to aged residential care.

- Completing literature reviews to inform the design and context of public health initiatives, including smoking cessation and safe sleep programmes for Pacific women.
- Carrying out root cause analyses, participating in incident investigation teams, and preparing comprehensive incident reports.
- Analysing clinical drivers behind increased demand for neonatal services to support planning for new units.
- Developing budget and patient-flow models to assess the impacts of new models of care 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 Health New Zealand and are placed at an approved NZCPHM accredited site.

During advanced training, registrars complete a range of experiential learning activities, including service delivery and project work that contribute to assessments. Working across different organisations allows registrars to build core public health medicine skills, gain exposure to diverse organisational cultures, develop a broad understanding of the health and social policy landscape, and explore varied career opportunities.

Registrars may work less than full time, to a minimum of 0.4FTE, to be arranged with the employing organisation.

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

Registrars are required to develop professional skills by giving oral presentations, chairing meetings, and undertake multisource feedback as part of their training and well as submission of three written project reports.

Registrars attend educational online sessions once a month and College-led training days three to four times a year and must prepare for a formal examination near the end of their training.

Employing organisations must be accredited by the NZCPHM, demonstrating their ability to provide an appropriate training environment and support achievement of required competencies. Accreditation is a straightforward process.

Most training sites must have an onsite Workplace Supervisor who is a Public Health Medicine Specialist, although alternative arrangements may be approved involving an onsite trainer and an offsite supervisor. Registrars must also obtain workplace approval before starting at a training site to ensure it meets 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

#### National Public Health Service

- Northern Region
- Te Ikaroa (Central)
- Te Manawa Taki (Midland)
- Te Waipounamu (South Island)

#### Te Whatu Ora

- Planning, Funding & Outcomes
- Health Gains Development

- Population Health
- Hauora Māori Health Services

#### Te Aho o te Kahu

#### PH & Forensic Science

#### Public Health Agency

#### Tu Ora Compass Health

#### University of Auckland & Otago

#### Immunisation Advisory Centre