

# New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine

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## Information about the Public Health Medicine Training Programme

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## INTRODUCTION

The following information aims to provide medical graduates interested in undertaking vocational training in public health medicine with a basic overview and description about the training programme provided by the New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine.

Each year the New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine (NZCPHM) conducts training and assessment to qualify medical graduates to become Public Health Physicians and Fellows of the College.

The College's training programme is accredited by the Medical Council of New Zealand and its management 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.

## About the College

### History

The NZCPHM was constituted in July 2008, and is therefore a relatively new medical college. Its creation evolved out of historical events in the status of the public health of New Zealanders, and an increasing recognition of Public Health Medicine as a pivotal and independent scope of practice of medical practice.

Prior to 1994, the New Zealand College of Community Medicine (NZCCM) was the training provider for Public Health Medicine in New Zealand. Between 1992 to mid-2008 the scope, practice and advocacy for the vocational scope of Public Health Medicine was governed by the Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine (AFPHEM), the latter body being a distinct Faculty within the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP). The AFPHEM's structure included a specific New Zealand Committee that held oversight of the New Zealand specific training, assessment and recertification of Public Health Medicine, and advised the Medical Council of New Zealand on matters of vocational registration in Public Health Medicine.

Various events which occurred in 2007 and 2008 within the RACP and AFPHEM became the catalyst for the establishment of the New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine (NZCPHM), which was constituted in July 2008 as a legal entity in New Zealand.

Another key player in the training and education of Public Health Physicians has been The New Zealand Population Health Charitable Trust. This registered Trust was established in 1998, to contract with the Clinical Training Agency (CTA) for the delivery and administration of the formal Public Health Medicine training programme in New Zealand based on the standards set by the NZCCM, then the AFPHEM and since 2008, the NZCPHM. From 2011, the NZCPHM has the contract to deliver the Public Health Medicine training programme.

## Purpose

The purpose of the New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine is to:

develop and maintain excellence in Public Health Medicine practice by

- Defining competencies and standards for training, qualifications and professional good practice;
- promoting, delivering, monitoring and evaluating training for registrars;
- supporting the continuing professional development of Public Health Medicine Specialists

The charitable purposes of the College are:

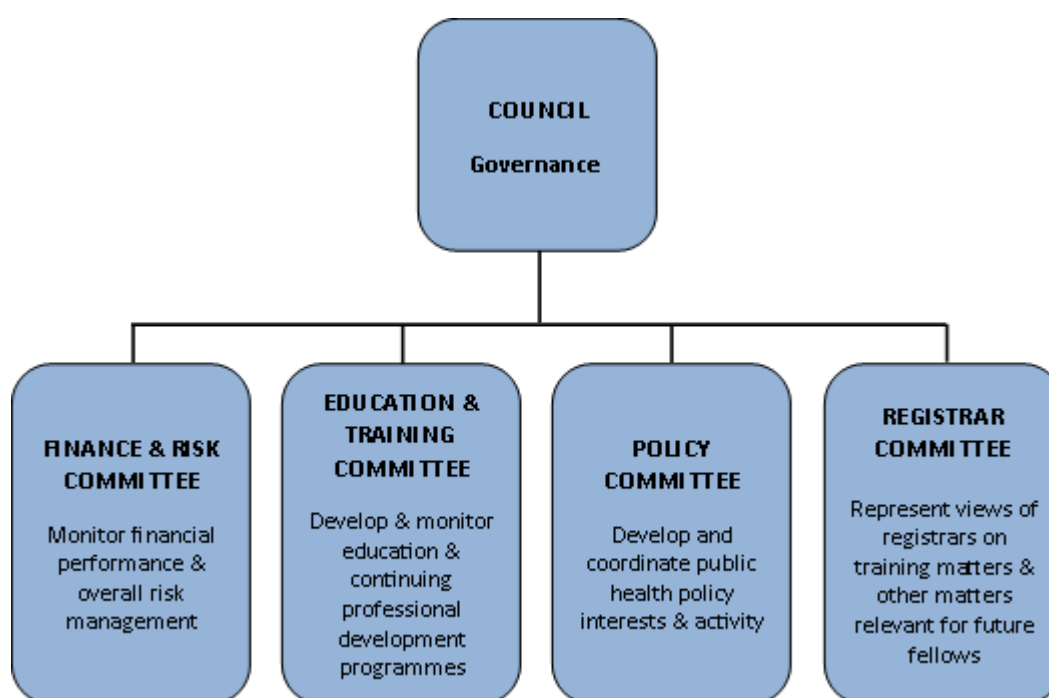
- (a) to seek to achieve the highest levels of health and well-being for all people, and to achieving health equity in Aotearoa New Zealand;
- (b) to develop and maintain excellence in Public Health Medicine practice for the benefit of the public;
- (c) to promote the development and maintenance of a sustainable Public Health Medicine Specialist workforce of adequate size and composition to meet the public health needs of Aotearoa New Zealand and, to a reasonable extent, the needs of international public health agencies;
- (d) to support the development of the wider public health workforce within Aotearoa New Zealand;
- (e) to advance education by delivering and otherwise promoting training in Public Health Medicine, and by awarding scholarships, prizes, academic course fees, and study and travel grants related to Public Health Medicine, for the benefit of the public; and
- (f) to promote the furthering of knowledge and research on public health issues.

## Organisational Structure

The role of the NZCPHM includes the setting and maintaining of standards for training, assessment and recertification of Public Health Medicine, and advising the Medical Council of New Zealand on matters of vocational registration in Public Health Medicine. The NZCPHM is governed by a Council which is supported by three subcommittees: Education and Training, Policy, and Finance and Risk. These committees undertake the majority of the developmental work of the College, and each is chaired by a senior Fellow. College Council has responsibility for approving the standards and policies recommended by these committees. A fourth subcommittee, the Registrar Committee, has a different focus which is to represent Registrars on matters pertaining to education and professional issues. The objects of the each of these committees are summarised in the College's organisational chart presented below.

Figure A

The New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine



With respect to the training programme, the curriculum, management and Fellowship applications are managed by the Education and Training Committee. This committee is made up of Fellows appointed by the Council, with external expertise in education appointed as required. To ensure quality training this committee offers advice, standards, curricula, mentoring and workplace training accreditation to help Registrars and their supervisors cover the large amount of work needed to attain and maintain competency in the practice of Public Health Medicine, and to attain Fellowship of the NZCPHM.

# OVERVIEW OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICINE TRAINING PROGRAMME

## Training Programme Structure

The Training Programme has two phases, namely Basic Training and Advanced Training. The Programme is full-time and continuous, except by application for part-time training or leave from the programme, and involves three years and nine months (195 weeks) of study.

Irrespective of whether the Training Programme is undertaken full time or part time, all registrars must achieve all the core skills and demonstrate the professional attributes, and pass all summative assessments within ten years in order to be able to apply for Fellowship and vocational registration in the scope of public health medicine with the Medical Council of New Zealand. Any time credited in recognition of prior learning will be deducted from the ten year time limit.

Registrars who are unable to complete the requirements of the Training Programme within the ten year period are not eligible to continue in training.

Basic Training requires 16 months (69 weeks) of full time study to enable a registrar to undertake a formal university qualification in public health. The courses approved for this purpose are the Masters of Public Health degrees offered by the University of Auckland and the University of Otago. In addition, participation in some College-led training activities is required.

Advanced Training (29 months Full Time Equivalent, or 126 weeks) requires a registrar to be employed in workplace training sites which may include: Public Health Units, Planning and Funding Units of District Health Boards, University of Auckland and University of Otago Public Health Departments, Ministry of Health, Primary Health Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations. During these placements Registrars undertake a combination of service work plus specific project work. The Advanced Training programme involves continuous review and support from workplace supervisors and Training Programme Supervisors.

It is strongly advisable that the first training site for a registrar in advanced training will be a Public Health Unit (PHU). Due to the limited number of available PHU options the registrar may be required to move from the main centres, i.e. Wellington and Auckland, to more regional areas e.g. Hamilton, Dunedin, Hawke's Bay, to undertake this placement.

Registrars are required to work alongside a WPS throughout their training, i.e. the WPS should work onsite in the same organisation as the registrar. For registrars who are towards the end of their training an off-site PHP will be considered if there is no-one onsite who is suitable to fulfil this role. During Basic and Advanced Training, a registrar has access to on-going training activities such as College-led training days, and other local educational activities.

## Applying for Training

The minimum entry requirements for medical practitioners wishing to apply for Public Health Medicine training are:

- current general registration with the Medical Council of New Zealand;
- a current Practising Certificate;
- at least two years' postgraduate experience in medicine;
- New Zealand citizenship or permanent residency; and
- completion of a formal application and documentation to the College.

Application requires the submission of a short reflective piece of writing 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. It is highly recommended that applicants have some knowledge of public health as they will need to demonstrate some understanding of this 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 of New Zealand and any other regulatory body that they have been registered with within the last five years.

For successful applicants, the first training year usually begins in late February of the following year.

Application for entry to the programme at Advanced Training is open to candidates outside the programme if they have completed MPH papers and a dissertation as approved by the Training Programme. The standard application process (as outlined above) applies.

## Assessment

A range of assessment tools are utilised by the Training Programme.

- Basic Training – The required University assessment processes for the Diploma/Masters of Public Health apply. However, the minimum acceptable grade for individual DPH/MPH papers is B+, with the exception that one B grade (not B-) will be allowed; the minimum acceptable grade for the dissertation is a B grade (not B-).
- Advanced Training – Registrars must achieve the necessary Public Health Medicine skills and professional attributes and successfully complete a range of formative and summative assessments encompassing:
  - Oral presentations
  - Chairing meetings
  - Writing reports
  - Multisource feedback assessment
  - Exam assessment

The Training Programme Director and the Assessment Panel monitor the progress and performance of each registrar annually.

## Prescribed MPH Papers

Registrars are required to take certain prescribed papers to ensure they cover the subject areas most relevant to the practice of Public Health Medicine. The prescribed papers differ between the Universities of Auckland and Otago, reflecting the different structure of the courses at each of the universities. Registrars are expected to undertake College prescribed MPH papers prior to optional papers, where the university timetable allows.

### University of Auckland

The University of Auckland requires the registrar to enrol for direct entry into the MPH programme. DPH and MPH courses are measured in points.

The College prescribes the following papers at the University of Auckland:

- POPLHLTH 706 Statistics in Health Science
- POPLHLTH 725 Environmental Health
- POPLHLTH 733 Health Promotion Theory and Models

- MAORHHTH 701 Foundations of Māori Health
- POPLHLTH 760 Principles of Public Health
- POPLHLTH 708 Epidemiology
- POPLHLTH 726 Health Protection
- POPLHLTH 776 Public Health in Practice

***Plus either one of***

- POPLHLTH 701 Research Methods in Health **or** POPLHLTH 767 Health Services Research Methods

***and either one or both of:***

- POPLHLTH 718 Health and Public Policy **and / or** POPLHLTH 719 Health Economics

**Optional recommended papers are:**

- POPLHLTH 704 Qualitative Health Research
- POPLHLTH 707 Statistics in Health Science 2
- POPLHLTH 709 Evidence for Best Practice
- POPLHLTH 739 Introduction to Pacific Health
- POPLHLTH 734 Health Promotion Strategies
- POPLHLTH 722 Organisation of Health Systems
- POPLHLTH 715 Global Public Health
- POPLHLTH 717 Health and Society
- POPLHLTH 732 Population Youth Health
- POPLHLTH 737 Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Studies
- POPLHLTH 763 Human Vaccinology
- POPLHLTH 765 Nutrition Interventions in Public Health
- HLTHMGT 721 Health Management
- MAORHHTH 706 Māori Health Policy and Practice
- MAORHHTH 709 Transformational Research for Māori Health
- MAORHHTH 710 Kaupapa Māori Theory
- MAORHHTH 711 Special Topic: Māori Quantitative Methods

## University of Otago

The University of Otago requires the completion of a Diploma of Public Health (DPH) to gain entry to the MPH programme.

The College prescribes the following papers at the University of Otago:

- PUBH 711 Principles in Epidemiology
- PUBH 712 Foundations of Hauora Māori
- PUBH 713 Society, Health and Promotion
- PUBH 714 Public Policy and Health Systems
- PUBH 733 Environment and Health
- PUBH 725 Applied Biostatistics 1 Fundamentals
- PUBH 734 Health Protection
- PUBH 732 Using Epidemiology for Public Health Practice

***Plus either one of***

- PUBH744 Healthy Public Policy **or** PUBH735 The Economics of Health Policy Decision Making

***and one of:***

- PUBH721 Methods for Epidemiological Research **or** PUBH723 Survey Methods **or** PUBH724 Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods.

**Recommended Optional papers:**

- PUBH 726 Applied Biostatistics 2 – Regression Methods
- PUBH 736 Economic Evaluation
- PUBH 737 Public Health Law and Public Health Ethics
- PUBH 738 Global Health Law and Global Health Ethics
- PUBH 739 An introduction to key aspects of, and approaches to, Pacific public health.
- PUBH 741 Hauora Māori – Policy, Practice and Research
- PUBH 742 International Health Systems
- PUBH 743 Health Promotion Programme Planning and Evaluation



## **Funding Terms and Conditions**

The Public Health Medicine Training Programme is funded by Health Workforce and the terms and conditions for the provision of registrar funding assistance reflect these contractual arrangements. Accordingly, a registrar's relationship with the NZCPHM is contractual and the provision of the study grant during basic training, and endowment during advanced 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.

## **Policies**

The NZCPHM has a range of policies and documents pertaining to the various objectives of the College and the management of the Training Programme. The full range of these policies is available on-line to all registrars formally enrolled in the Training Programme. Registrars are advised to familiarise themselves with these and keep up with policy developments and changes as they occur.

## **Communications**

The NZCPHM provides a range of communication forums with fellows and registrars, including:

### **Registrar Training Manual**

The Training Manual is available on-line to inform and guide registrars about training requirements. Registrars are advised in advance of changes in the training and assessment requirements expected by the College. Additionally, transitional arrangements are put in place to manage any policy change that has significant implications for registrars.

### **College Newsletter**

The College communicates with its registrars and fellows through a monthly newsletter. This medium is also often used to notify fellows and registrars of changes in College policy such as changes in the structure and content of training requirements. Some changes will also be advised directly to individual registrars and/or via updates in the Training Manual as appropriate.

### **College Website**

Registrars are expected to be familiar with the NZCPHM's website. The Members section is where information on exams, educational activities, publications and policies are detailed, plus the website includes information about College events and employment opportunities.

### **College Database**

The College depends on being able to communicate directly and at short notice with each registrar if necessary. On acceptance into registrar training or as a College Fellow, members will be provided with instructions and a password to enable them to keep their contact details on the College database updated and correct at all times.

Fellows and registrars are requested to ensure they are familiar with the activities and communications of the College, and also the specific requirements pertaining to training and education.

## **Privacy and Confidentiality**

Any personal information provided by registrars and fellows is strictly confidential to the College staff, members of relevant College committees, examiners and supervisors. Registrars are therefore

asked at the stage of Training Programme application for their consent to the NZCPHM providing relevant and necessary information to the appropriate personnel and authorities to enable compliance with all statutory and policy obligations.

## Fellowship

The granting of vocational registration is a separate process to that of completion of training or attainment of Fellowship and is determined by the Medical Council of New Zealand under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003. Vocational registration is usually obtained once Fellowship of the College is conferred.

Fellows need to apply to the Medical Council ([www.mcnz.org.nz](http://www.mcnz.org.nz)) to obtain vocational registration.

## Key Dates

**Basic Training:** Applications for Basic Training must be received by the College by mid-June of the year preceding enrolment in a DPH/MPH programme (closing date will be advertised on the College website). Applications must be submitted electronically completing the appropriate form (TP-AF).

**Advanced Training:** For full time registrars, Advanced Training usually begins mid-year (July) on completion of Basic Training. However as Advanced Training includes placement and employment with an accredited public health workplace/site, registrars are advised to begin job applications well in advance of their transition to Advanced Training.

**Fellowship:** Applications for Fellowship can be made once a registrar has completed all the requirements of the Training Programme.

## Continuing Professional Development

The NZCPHM offers a MCNZ accredited continuing professional development programme to its Fellows and other public health practitioners on request. This programme is called Tracking of Professional Standards (TOPS).

Participation in an accredited CPD Programme is mandatory for Fellows. Proof of participation is required by the MCNZ to enable on-going recertification and licensing to practice.

A detailed TOPS Manual is available for Fellows of the College.

## Credit for Prior Learning

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

For medical graduates applying with previous public health experience and/or qualifications outside of any current MPH study, the standard application procedure applies and an amended programme may be devised once the applicant has been accepted into training.

## College Contacts

Prospective registrars should seek further information from the College website at [www.nzcphm.org.nz](http://www.nzcphm.org.nz).

For further information on the New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine training, assessment and admission to Fellowship contact:

Senior Executive Officer (Education) - Ms Sarah Bell – [sarah@nzcphm.org.nz](mailto:sarah@nzcphm.org.nz)

General Manager - Ms Pam Watson – [pam@nzcphm.org.nz](mailto:pam@nzcphm.org.nz)