Wessex Public Health Practitioner Development Programme

2015-2017

Application Guidance Document*

* To be read in conjunction with the Application Form
This guidance document is for workforces across Wessex (Hampshire, IoW and Dorset region) who promote, protect, advocate for, develop and improve health with local communities and groups. They may be based in local government, the NHS, primary care or any of the health and social care organisations including voluntary and third sectors.

This guidance document sets out a process for the application of practitioners to the Public Health Practitioner Development Programme. The guidance includes information on:

1. The background to the PH Practitioner Development Programme
2. The Public Health Practitioner Development Programme
3. The Application Process
   3.1. Selection Criteria
   3.2. Application Submission
   3.3. Selection Process
4. Terms and Conditions
1. Background

In April 2011, the UK Public Health Register (UKPHR) accepted its first submission of a portfolio for Public Health Practitioner registration. This regulatory framework aims to protect the public via the development of agreed professional standards which will:

- Provide quality assurance of the workforce to a common and agreed standard;
- Provide quality control of the workforce by placement onto a professional register.

This framework of standards for public health practitioners is now a fundamental part of career and skills development which develops this workforce to support the most effective delivery of public health outcomes. Since 2011, Health Education Wessex have used the UKPHR standards and frameworks to commence a local assessment process in the Wessex region.

The Public Health Practitioner Standards are set at a minimum of Level 5 of the Public Health Knowledge and Skills Framework, equivalent to the level of the third year of an academic first degree. They can be downloaded at:


Currently there are 198 practitioners registered nationally on the UKPHR, 44 of whom have been through the Wessex scheme. Registered practitioners are from a range of Public Health disciplines and backgrounds such as Social Care; Sexual Health; Health Promotion; Health Intelligence; Health protection, Mental Health and many more.

The programme works with practitioners wishing to develop professional portfolios offering them a range of support through CPD opportunities including support in self-assessment, collating evidence and demonstrating competence. Assessors and verifiers have been trained to formally review portfolio summaries and evidence; registered PH practitioners and assessors may act as informal mentors to practitioners (where they are not their assessors).

One way of acquiring appropriate knowledge to meet the Public Health Practitioner Standards is through participating in the Open University Course ‘Promoting Public Health’ K311.
Places on this are limited this year due to funding restraints; therefore other courses may be considered and advice will be given on this. If you wish to apply for the K311 course, please complete the application form for this. The K311 Course will start on October 2015.
2. Public Health Practitioner Development Programme

The Wessex School of Public Health, Health Education Wessex is committed to supporting all practitioners who wish to develop portfolios of evidence against the Public Health Practitioner Standards.

Practitioners who are successful with gaining a place on the Wessex PH Practitioner Development Programme will benefit from a range of support and development opportunities including:

1. Induction to the programme
2. Portfolio Development Groups (PDGs)
3. Development of a Learning Contract
4. Access to Public Health related Master classes
5. Access and Support to a mentor
6. Allocation to an assessor – when evidence is ready for assessment
7. Access to a verifier panel prior to submission of the portfolio to the UKPHR

At the beginning of the programme, practitioners will be expected to attend the Induction Day as on this day all applicants will receive their information pack and gain an understanding of the programme in more detail. Successful applicants will also be required to agree a learning and development contract with their line manager to reflect their learning needs and plans to completing the programme (further information on the contract will be provided on the induction day).

Practitioners will normally submit a completed portfolio within 18 months of being accepted onto the programme. As a guide for employers†, it is advised that following discussions with their line manager, participants are allowed protected learning time to undertake the following during those 18 months:

- Induction day to the programme
- Portfolio building support sessions (PDGs)
- Appropriate master classes (as agreed with line manager)
- Time in the workplace to draw evidence for the portfolio from current work practice
- A total of 3 days (pro rata for part time staff) for portfolio writing

† NB Applicants are expected to comply with their employing organisation’s process for study leave.
• A minimum of three dates for local verification panels are agreed each year, these are timed to precede the UKPHR registration board meetings.

• Practitioners will be expected to submit a completed portfolio within 18 months of being accepted onto the programme and six weeks prior to the date of the panels

**Please note:** as the programme is part of a local implementation process for the Public Health Practitioner Standards, all participants will be expected to contribute to the evaluation of the scheme.
3. Application Process

In order to be considered for a place on the programme, interested practitioners must submit a completed application form. In addition you are requested to complete the self-assessment form. In completing the self-assessment against the Public Health Practitioner Standards, the applicant will describe their public health practice and relevant experience and skills gained to date, begin to reflect on each area of the standards (giving practical examples of evidence where possible) and begin to identify any gaps they will need to address (and how they intend to go about this). Incomplete applications will be returned with a request for more information.

As this activity forms the start of the process of the programme, we consider this an important indication of commitment to develop in this way and aspiration to become registered as a UKPHR PH Practitioner.

3.1. Selection criteria
Applicants must be able to demonstrate:

- Employment within the Wessex geographical area.
- A minimum of two years’ public health experience.
- Applicants should be able to demonstrate a range of relevant experience with only a few gaps, which should be relatively easy to address within the timeframe by completing the self-assessment against the Public Health Practitioner Standards.
- The signed application commits the practitioner to aim to submit a completed portfolio by the date agreed in the learning contract and within 18 months.
- The learning contract completed at the start of the programme will demonstrate the applicant’s commitment to the completion of elements of the programme by the deadlines indicated. Where unforeseen circumstances arise and these deadlines are likely not to be met, we expect applicants to inform the central office and their local PH workforce development lead.
- The commitment from line managers for support is also demonstrated through the signed application form, including the agreed time off to attend formal learning sessions, additional relevant CPD events arranged through the programme and allocated writing time for portfolio development.
3.2. Application submission process and deadline
Please send the signed application documents either by post, fax or email. In the case of an application sent by email, it is also essential to have signatures, either by electronic or signed by hand, scanned and emailed.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 30th June 2015

Completed applications should be sent to:

By Post: Laurie Didlick, PH Administrator
          Wessex School of Public Health
          Southern House,
          Otterbourne, Winchester, SO21 2RU

By Email: PH.Development@wessex.hee.nhs.uk

By Fax: 01962 718 401

3.3. Selection Panel
Applications will be reviewed by a selection panel comprising members of the public health workforce development team of the Wessex School of Public Health to ensure that candidates meet the application criteria. Successful applicants will then be invited to attend an interview on either the week commencing 31st August 2015 or the week commencing the 7th September 2015. All successful applicants will be confirmed by the 21st September 2015.

Please note: Applicants not accepted onto the programme will be considered for support through other programmes.

Successful applicants and their line manager will be expected to attend the Public Health Practitioner Programme Induction Day on 29th October 2015 (venue to be confirmed)

If applying, it is recommended you and your manager note this date in the calendar now.
4. **Terms and conditions**

Applicants accepted onto the Public Health Practitioner Development Programme 2015-17 must agree to abide by its principles and participate fully in the support programme as outlined in this document. On acceptance onto the programme practitioners will be expected to attend the Induction Day. Practitioners will be supported to draw up a learning and development contract which is agreed with their line manager. Should an applicant be accepted onto the programme and fail to comply without formal notification of exceptional circumstances they will not be guaranteed further support in the future.

Please also see and read related documents: Application and Self-Assessment Form