New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine

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 (AFPHM), the latter body being a distinct Faculty within the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP). The AFPHM’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 AFPHM 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 AFPHM and since 2008, the NZCPHM. From 2011, the NZCPHM has the contract to deliver the Public Health Medicine training programme.

Mission & Objects
The mission of the New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine is to:

• facilitate a high standard of population health in Aotearoa New Zealand through excellence in the practice of Public Health Medicine;
• provide high quality training of registrars, and effective continuing professional development of Fellows; and

• advocacy for policies and practices that promote public health.

The objects of the College are:

(a) to ensure good governance of the College, and that its business is conducted in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner;

(b) to seek to achieve the highest levels of health and well-being for all people in Aotearoa New Zealand;

(c) to seek to reduce health disparities between Māori and non-Māori by promoting the study of, and advancement of knowledge in Māori health, promoting and encouraging high levels of cultural competencies and ethical standards in relation to public health practice, teaching and research as it relates to Māori, and working in collaboration with Māori for the advancement and dissemination of public health research and best practice;

(d) to develop and maintain excellence in Public Health Medicine practice by defining competencies and standards of good practice, promoting, delivering, monitoring and evaluating effective training of Registered trainees, and supporting the continuing professional development of Public Health Physicians

(e) to promote the development and maintenance of a sustainable Public Health Physician 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 and to collaborate with the Population Health Charitable Trust and other bodies to achieve this object

(f) promote the development and maintenance of a sustainable Public Health Physician 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, and to collaborate with other New Zealand and international bodies to achieve this object;

(g) to support development of the wider public health workforce within Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally, and

(h) to promote for the public benefit 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.
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

Competency Framework
The curriculum of the NZCPHM Training Programme is a competency based framework which specifies the knowledge, skills, attitudes, learning opportunities and guidance required by a Registrar in order to develop the competencies required of a public health physician.

Training Programme Structure
The Training Programme has two phases namely Basic training and Advanced training and involves three years and nine months of continuous study, if undertaken full time.

Basic Public Health Medicine training requires 16 months of full time study to enable a Registrar to undertake a formal university qualification in public health. The course approved for this purpose is the Master of Public Health degree offered by the University of Auckland and the University of Otago. In addition, participation in some College-run training activities is required.

Advanced training (29 months Full Time Equivalent) 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.

During Basic and Advanced training, a Registrar has access to on-going training activities such as College-organised 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 Annual Practising Certificate;
- two years’ post - graduate experience in medicine;
- New Zealand citizenship or permanent residency; and
- completion of a formal application and documentation to the College.

Application requires submission of a personal introduction essay, a curriculum vitae and certified copies of relevant certificates. From this information, applicants are short-listed and invited for interview. 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
Assessment methods and tools are blueprinted to the Public Health Medicine competencies and include a range of assessment methods including:

- **Basic Training** – The required University assessment processes for the Diploma/Masters of Public Health apply. However, a B grade (or above) must be achieved for each paper as well as the dissertation, for the purpose of entry into the NZCPHM Advanced Training programme.

- **Advanced Training** – Registrars must achieve the necessary Public Health Medicine Competencies and pass a range of assessments encompassing:
  - Oral presentations
  - Chairing meetings
  - Writing reports
  - Multisource feedback assessment
  - Exam assessment

An Assessment Panel monitors the progress and performance of each registrar annually.

Prescribed MPH Papers
A Registrar is required to take certain prescribed papers to ensure he/she covers the subject areas most relevant to the practice of Public Health Medicine. The prescribed papers differ between Auckland and Otago Universities, reflecting the different structure of the courses at each of the universities. A Registrar is expected to undertake College prescribed MPH papers prior to optional papers, where the university timetable allows.

University of Auckland
A Registrar is required to complete a Diploma of Public Health (DPH) with at least a B average to gain entry to the MPH programme. DPH and MPH courses are measured in points. A Registrar must complete 240 points to obtain an MPH, i.e. 12 papers plus a dissertation.

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
- **MAORIHTH 701** Introduction to Māori Health
- **POPLHLTH 760** Principles of Public Health
- **POPLHLTH 708** Epidemiology
- **POPLHLTH 726** Health Protection

*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 709 Clinical Epidemiology and Evidence-Based Health Care
- POPLHLTH 721 Health Management
- POPLHLTH 739 Introduction to Pacific Health
- POPLHLTH 734 Health Promotion Strategies
- POPLHLTH 722 Health Care Organisation

**University of Otago**

The University of Otago requires the completion of a Diploma of Public Health (DPH) to gain entry to the MPH programme. A Registrar must undertake six papers plus a dissertation in order to obtain an MPH.

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

- PUBH 701 Epidemiology and Biostatistics
- PUBH 705 Health Promotion
- PUBH 702 Society, Health and Public Policy
- PUBH 703 Health and Environment
- PUBH 709 Hauora – Māori Health Issues

Optional recommended papers are:

- PUBH 706 Health Systems
- PUBH 704 Health Economics
- PUBH 708 Social Research Methods
- PUBH 710 Public Health Law and Public Health Ethics

**Policies**

The NZCPHM has a range of policies and documents pertaining to the various objectives of the College. Additionally, the College applies specific policies pertaining to 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 encouraged to become very 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 their profile on the College database to enable them to keep these 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.

Fellowship of the NZCPHM is awarded by the College Council to those applicants who have:

- A recognized medical degree
- Successfully completed and passed the NZCPHM accredited training
- Applied to the NZPHM Council for a determination of additional training and examination requirements

Fellows need to apply to the Medical Council (www.mcnz.org.nz) to obtain vocational registration.

Key Dates
Basic Training: Applications for Basic Training must be received by the College by the 30 June of the year preceding enrolment in a DPH/MPH programme. Applications must be submitted electronically completing the appropriate form (TP-AF).

Advanced Training: 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 make formal application for the advanced training programme as early as possible while they are enrolled in the basic programme.
Fellowship: Applications for Fellowship can be made once a Registrar has completed all the requirements of the Training Programme.

Recognition of International Graduates
The New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine has specific policies and procedures regarding evaluation of the qualifications, training and experience of overseas trained public health physicians who would like to work in public health medicine in New Zealand. The College’s role is to advise the Medical Council of New Zealand of the applicant’s suitability for vocational registration in New Zealand.

Likewise the College has policies regarding the assessment of any international medical graduate with previous training and/or public health medicine practice experience, and the extent to which this training meets New Zealand standards and competencies for independent practice in a New Zealand context.

The College’s Education and Training Committee determines the NZCPHM training and/or assessments required based on the applicant’s previous training, experience and qualifications.

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.

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

Senior Executive Officer - Ms Sarah Targett - sarah@nzcphm.org.nz

General Manager – Ms Jane Dancer – Jane@nzcphm.org.nz