



Employing a Public Health Medicine Registrar

Prepared by the New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine

Public Health Medicine Registrars (PHMR)

The Public Health Medicine Training Programme

Public health physicians who practise in New Zealand contribute to the overall health of our population rather than focusing on individual health needs. The medical specialty of public health focuses on finding practical solutions for emergent public health issues, combining epidemiology, global health, medical sociology and the determinants of health.

Public health medicine registrars (PHMRs) are medical doctors who are registered to practise medicine with the Medical Council of New Zealand and who are training to become specialists in the field of public health medicine. To apply to become a PHMR, an applicant must have had at least two years' post-graduate experience.

In 2016, there are 32 PHMR enrolled in the Public Health Medicine Training Programme. These doctors predominantly work in the Wellington and Auckland regions, with the rest distributed throughout Southland, Otago, Canterbury, Manawatu-Wanganui, Bay of Plenty, Waikato and Northland.

The training programme consists of:

- 16 months full time equivalent (FTE) of Basic Training, involving the completion of a Masters of Public Health degree from the University of Otago or the University of Auckland.
- 29 months FTE of Advanced Training, consisting of supervised employment at a minimum of three accredited training sites, one of which must be a Public Health Unit.

During the course of training, attendance at additional regional and national education sessions is required. Training is normally full time and continuous, unless part time training or leave from the programme has been approved by the NZCPHM.

Assessments are derived from the competency-based curriculum, and include supervisors' reports, written work, direct observation of key oral skills and multi-source appraisals. Assessment is overseen by regional training programme supervisors external to the workplace. PHMRs also sit an oral examination in the final months of the programme.

The public health medicine training programme is funded by Health Workforce New Zealand, Ministry of Health. To be eligible for this funding, the PHMR must hold New Zealand permanent residency or citizenship.

For more information about public health medicine or public health medicine registrars (PHMR), contact the NZCPHM.

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Benefits to the Employer

Employing a PHMR can prove to be a very cost-effective method of introducing a highly-trained and motivated member to a project team or work-place.

Training sites (i.e. employers) receive a HWNZ endowment of \$24,400 + GST per annum (pro-rated for part-time training and for contracts less than 12 months). The endowment recognises the time commitment of the workplace supervisor, PHMR absences from the workplace to attend education sessions, and general workplace expenses involved in taking on a new employee.

In addition to financial benefits, employers appreciate PHMRs for their high work-rate, clinical medical experience, and ability to think through complex problems.



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

Associate Director at the Centre for Public Health Research



Site Accreditation

All training sites are accredited by the NZCPHM.

Accreditation is an assessment of the ability of a training site to support PHMR achievement of competencies and provide a quality training environment. The NZCPHM's training site accreditation standards include:

- Provision of facilities/infrastructure for the Registrar
- Support services in place for the Registrar
- Opportunities to develop and demonstrate core Public Health Medicine skills
- Workplace Supervisor
- Workplace supervision
- Balance between learning and service work

Ideally training sites should be able to provide a workplace supervisor to guide, teach and supervise the PHMR. Workplace supervisors are usually Fellows of the NZCPHM who are registered in the vocational scope of public health medicine and who have at least 2 years' experience as a public health physician. However, if an on-site workplace supervisor is not available, arrangements can be made to ensure this supervision can be provided by an off-site workplace supervisor.

Examples of workplaces that have employed PHMR over the last 10 years

Public Health Units	Public Health Association
District Health Board Planning and Funding units	SafeKids New Zealand
Ministry of Health (e.g. Office of the Director of Public Health, National Screening Unit)	Fred Hollows Foundation
Health Quality and Safety Commission	University Medical School Departments
National Heart Foundation	Centre for Public Health Research
Office of the Children's Commissioner	Environmental Science and Research
	New Zealand Child Youth Epidemiology Services
	Central Primary Health Organisation