

April 2015

Factsheet Two:

The UK Public Health Register and its registrants

The UK Public Health Register (UKPHR) holds a voluntary register ¹. It is the only one of its kind having the means to identify, raise the profile of and communicate with the public health workforce. It is independent of all governments and sectional interests.

The register is for professionals practising in public health.

There are three types of registrant:

Specialists

The majority of specialist registrants are working at a senior level (consultant or consultant equivalent: normally perceived as Level 8 and above in the Public Health Skills and Knowledge Framework) in public health.

Generalist specialists are required to demonstrate evidence of knowledge and current competence across the full breadth of public health.

Defined specialists have chosen to specialise more highly in a narrower area of public health practice. They must show evidence of knowledge across the full breadth of public health to the same standard as generalists. They will also demonstrate current competencies in some particular areas of practice at a higher level than that required for generalists, usually reflecting their highly specialised professional experience in service or academic environments.

Specialty Registrars

Trainees undertaking the Specialty Training Programme, who are not already regulated by a statutory regulator (for example, doctors are regulated by the General Medical Council) are eligible to register with UKPHR during their training. When they complete their training they are eligible to register as specialists upon production of the Certificate of Completion of Training.

Practitioners

Practitioners are key members of the public health workforce who work across the full breadth of public health from health improvement and health protection, to health information, community development and nutrition. They work in a wide range of settings from the NHS and local government to the voluntary and private sectors. Practitioners are working at Level 5 and above of the Public Health Skills and Knowledge Framework.

¹ A voluntary register accredited by the Professional Standards Authority

Since 2011 local schemes of practitioner registration have been operating in a range of settings across England, Scotland and Wales. Application for registration from practitioners working in Northern Ireland is also possible. The schemes are popular and successful - UKPHR now wishes to roll out practitioner registration UK-wide.

UKPHR trains the local schemes' assessors and verifiers. In the case of practitioner registration, the assessment process is highly devolved. Full documentation from the assessor and verifier is considered at meetings of the local scheme's verification panel and subsequently by UKPHR's Registration Panel and either the assessor or verifier directly inputs to the Registration Panel's deliberations.

UKPHR maintains *quality assurance* through a formal system of moderation.

There is overlap between UKPHR's register and those maintained by statutory regulators including the General Medical Council (GMC), the General Dental Council (GDC), the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). This is because some public health professionals are from backgrounds which lead to registration with one or more of these.

Some are now in positions where registration with a statutory regulator is required. For these, the statutory regulator provides generic registration as, for example, doctors. UKPHR offers additional, public health-specific registration through which registrants can provide employers and others with independently assessed evidence of their current *public health professional competence*.

Others who qualified initially as, for example, doctors may move to positions for which registration with a statutory regulator is not required. For these, UKPHR provides a ready means of demonstrating their current competence in public health. This is also true for individuals from backgrounds where no regulation at all is legally required.

An individual registered with both UKPHR and a statutory regulator is subject to the standards, rules and professional requirements of both organisations.

UKPHR has in place **Memoranda of Understanding** (MoU) with the GMC and GDC; and offers similar arrangements to other statutory regulators. Central to the MoU approach is a process for handling complaints and other information received about the fitness to practise of registered individuals and the sharing of information about them.

For further information or if you wish to contact the UKPHR for any other purpose
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