



UKPHR

Public Health Register

Protecting the public | improving practice

UKPHR Strategy 2024-2029

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Message from Andrew Jones, Chair of UKPHR

I am delighted to present to you the UKPHR Strategy 2024-2029.

Our strategy has been developed over the last 12 months and communicates the vision, values and main priorities for the UK Public Health Register and our Board, over the next 5 years.

I am grateful to the small Strategy Working Group that has developed the final Strategy document, to all who contributed to the draft content and to our key stakeholders, who willingly engaged with us, providing important feedback.

This 5-year strategy provides the framework for the next phase of UKPHR journey, as a dedicated regulator for multi-disciplinary professionals in public health in the UK.

Our strategy sets out clearly where and how we wish to invest our time and resources, working collaboratively to ensure that the public will benefit from excellent public health practice delivered by an effectively regulated multidisciplinary profession.

We are committed to ongoing engagement and collaborative working with all our partners, notably employers, to promote a good understanding of the public health workforce, and the importance and benefit of the registration and revalidation of both the public health specialist and practitioner workforce across the 4 Nations of the UK.

Our strategy builds upon the excellent work that has previously been done and identifies new opportunities and challenges that must be addressed in developing resilient and high quality multi-disciplinary public health practice and regulation for the future.

The UKPHR Board looks forward to working with you during implementation.

Message from Jessica Lichtenstein, Chief Executive of UKPHR

I started at UKPHR in late 2021, when the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic was slowing down, but people in public health certainly were not. It became clear to me through conversations with our registrants and those who work closely with them, that we needed a new focus to be able to support the public health workforce through significant challenges as the impact of the pandemic has eased.

The importance and recognition of multi-disciplinary public health professionals is now established and growing, particularly having developed during these past few challenging years. Those who work to keep populations healthy are in demand but burnt out and exhausted. As the regulator, we need to now focus on supporting our registrants to continue to develop and progress, and to meet and promote excellent standards of practice. We must work closely across the system to do this.

Our new strategy focusses on people: those we register, those who work hard to engage with and support our registrants, and those who share our vision and goals. Continuing to develop and invest in these people is essential to the continued growth of our register, and to the protection of the public through regulation. We look forward to working with our partners to deliver this strategy, and I can't wait to see what these next five years bring.

Part 1: Who we are

UK Public Health Register (UKPHR) is an independent, dedicated regulator for public health professionals in the United Kingdom, providing professional regulation to public health specialists, specialty registrars and practitioners from a variety of backgrounds, all of whom have a common core of knowledge and skills. We are an Accredited Register with the Professional Standards Authority (PSA), who have awarded us a Quality Mark.

We define public health as: “The science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through organised efforts of society.” (Sir Donald Acheson) and our primary objective is to provide public protection by ensuring that only competent public health professionals are registered and that high standards of practice are maintained and enhanced.

Our Vision:

The public will benefit from excellent public health practice delivered by an effectively regulated multi-disciplinary profession who continuously maintain and enhance their professional competence.

- Our Values:**
- *Ensuring public protection*
 - *Achieving fairness and equity*
 - *Promoting transparency and openness*
 - *Enabling resilience through robust regulation*
 - *Facilitating a collaborative approach across the profession*

This strategy sets out how we plan to bring together our vision and values into a set of themed priorities, which will formulate a coherent programme of work. This work will take place from 2024-2029.

Part 2: Our strategy

We've been working with our Board, our registrants, our wider workforce, and the broader public health profession to develop our strategy for the next five years, which will promote our vision and values.

Four distinct themes have been identified; each include several specific priorities which will help us achieve our vision:

Theme 1 - Maintain, develop, and grow our Register

Theme 2 - Support and enable the multi-disciplinary public health workforce to maintain professional standards

Theme 3 - Promote collaboration across the public health and regulatory sectors to enhance public safety

Theme 4 - Invest in our people and systems

Theme 1 – Maintain, develop, and grow our Register

The UKPHR Register is accredited by the PSA, which means we continuously strive to meet their [standards](#). We embed these standards in everything we do and share the PSA's objectives of protecting the public from harm and maintaining public confidence in the profession.

Our Register is growing. We expect this trajectory to continue, with the expansion of multidisciplinary public health specialty training, the growth of public health practitioner schemes and apprenticeships, and the introduction of the Specialist registration by portfolio route (SRbPA). We will continue to strive to evaluate and improve our systems, with the aim of registering all eligible public health professionals whether through prospective routes (i.e. specialist training programmes, apprenticeships) or retrospective routes (practitioner schemes and SRbPA). Although this aim may take some time, we are dedicated to enabling the profession to register and remove barriers.

We will work to maintain, develop, and grow our register to:

- Ensure all specialists, practitioners and trainees are enabled to register with UKPHR and value their status.
- Understand what our data tells us about our registrants and work to promote inclusivity, accessibility, and fairness.
- Reduce barriers to registration and promote flexibility and fairness.
- Monitor, evaluate and review professional practice and define our ambitions across the wider public health system.

We will achieve this by:

- Working closely with employers and support schemes for aspiring specialist and practitioner registrants to promote strong public health communities that value registration and ensure access.
- Engaging with specialty training programmes to ensure future UKPHR registrants are supported, prepared, and have a clear registration offer.
- Working closely with practitioner registrants to ensure ongoing benefits of registration are clear and accessible.
- Reviewing all registration processes and policies to ensure they are flexible and fair.
- Collecting and analysing data on registrant and applicant demographics including protected characteristics and put in place measures to address identified issues.
- Highlighting the benefits of being a registrant through our website and engagement with employers and other key stakeholders.

Theme 2 – Support and enable the multi-disciplinary public health workforce to maintain professional standards

There are critical challenges facing the public health workforce, particularly the specialist workforce. The public health landscape is complex, and includes local authorities, the NHS (at local and national level), national public health agencies, and the four national governments. We will continue to contribute to national discussions to develop a UK-wide understanding of what is required to ensure a trained and sustainable public health workforce with the necessary skills and expertise.

However, we must be clear about our part in these conversations. We are one of several UK-wide public health organisations promoting the workforce agenda, but we have a specific role in enhancing public protection through professional regulation. The public health workforce is under unprecedented stress, and we aim to better understand what the key challenges are for our registrants so we can better support them. The way for us to do this is to have a clear programme of engagement with public health system partners across the four-countries, so that we can work closely with them to support public health professionals.

Working closely with partners, we will ensure:

- There is a good understanding of the public health workforce and the demographics of our registrants, to ensure we provide insight from our professional data that results in an inclusive profession whose developmental needs are met.
- We provide clear and accessible information about training and career pathways which give public health professionals access to professional regulation and ongoing registration.
- The multidisciplinary public health workforce is fully recognised and valued across the sector.

We will achieve this by:

- Engaging directly with employers across the four nations to understand how best to increase access to the SRbPA route, and work with them to support individuals through the process.
- Working with public health employers to include UKPHR registration in job descriptions.
- Contributing to the system-wide discussion and development of a PH career framework, ensuring appropriate points of registration are embedded in local and national systems.

Theme 3 – Promote constructive relationships across the public health and regulatory sectors to enhance public safety

We are one of several organisations that work with and on behalf of public health professionals across the UK- alongside, the Faculty of Public Health (with a focus on standards), the Royal Society of Public Health (with a focus on the wider workforce), and the Association of Directors of Public Health (with a focus on employers). We have developed effective approaches to joint working with these organisations, which ensures our respective roles are clear. These relationships are essential, and we aim to align with these organisations wherever possible, to ensure the public health profession hears a unified voice.

We also prioritise relationships with each of the four countries in the UK, and work to ensure our functions are relevant to multi-disciplinary public health in the Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and England contexts.

As the only multi-disciplinary public health regulator in a world now grappling with post-pandemic public health workforce challenges, we're keen to share our learning with others. We continue to engage on a global level with public health regulation to understand how others do things, and to support other systems who wish to expand formal support for their multidisciplinary public health workforce.

Regulators working across the health sector must work together to protect the public. Regulatory policy is developing in a direction that minimises burden and maximises information sharing and joint working across healthcare. We are a very small organisation with limited resources, so we value the opportunity to work with other regulators, adopt accepted best practice, and align as much as possible with other regulatory systems to lessen the system's regulatory burden.

We will work to:

- Develop and maintain strong alliances with public health and healthcare organisations across the four countries of the UK and encourage four-country information sharing.
- Enhance information sharing across healthcare regulators and public health organisations to form a coherent view of public health practice.
- Promote our status as the only multi-disciplinary public health regulator in the world.
- Develop a clear, dynamic offer to all our stakeholders about what kind of organisation UKPHR is, what we do, and how we engage.

We will achieve this by:

- Enhancing communication with our registrants on UK-wide best practice for public health through our practitioner conference and our registrant newsletter.
- Keeping on a front foot regarding public health system changes and funding structures, updating our policies and processes as appropriate.
- Aligning our systems with other healthcare regulators, particularly those who register public health professionals, where possible.
- Engaging with the PSA's accredited register programme and the Institute of Regulation to ensure we embed best regulatory practice.
- Implementing a programme of regular engagement with those organisations and individuals with a training and development focus, public health apprenticeship providers, national workforce/training teams, and specialist trainers and trainees.

Theme 4 – Invest in our people and systems

We depend on people to support our ambitions, whether they are staff, Board members, or the wider volunteer workforce who undertake assessment and deliver quality assurance. We're committed to empowering them to develop skills and ensure that they feel supported within an inclusive culture, no matter what level they're working at. We want UKPHR to be a great place to work.

Because of our small size, we need to be innovative about how we approach our work and be open to new ways of working. We've started to embrace technology which has led to new, more efficient operations, and has offered the opportunity for our team to develop new skills.

We will work to:

- Treat our staff and wider workforce fairly and ensure they feel heard and supported.
- Grow and retain staff and our wider workforce, making UKPHR a great place to work with a supportive culture.
- Ensure we have a fit-for-purpose governance system in place, with opportunities for Board development.
- Create conditions to ensure learning and improvement across the organisation.
- Continuously evaluate and improve our own performance to maximise efficiencies

We will achieve this by:

- Regularly seeking feedback from our team, wider workforce, and Board/Committee members and taking action to address any identified issues.
- Ensuring we have an effective programme in place for support of staff including regular appraisal and access to appropriate development opportunities.
- Being innovative in our approach to resourcing work, including embracing and maximising use of digital and new technologies.
- Developing specialised skills across our team, reducing the need for outsourcing.
- Implement a programme of Board development to ensure we consistently reflect principles of good governance.

Part 3: How will we measure success?

We expect the register to **continue to grow** throughout 2024-2029 because of:

- The new and expanding apprenticeship route to practitioner registration
- An increase in specialist training numbers
- More formalised local and national support for Specialist Registration by Portfolio applications
- An increasing recognition of the importance of regulated public health practitioners, resulting in an increased focus on support for registration.

We will monitor this growth closely and will expand on our annual reporting to include some of these statistics and the improvement activity we've undertaken. We'll create a SMART action plan that describes the specific pieces work we will undertake in more detail, which will be updated and published periodically.

We also intend to publish further data on demographics and protected characteristics as part of our annual report so we can more formally monitor trends regarding who is on our Register.


We will implement surveys of staff, our Board and Committees, and our wider workforce (who work on our behalf to provide assessment and quality assurance services), so we can continuously assess how we're meeting our objectives outlined above.

We want this document to be dynamic, subject to regular review to evaluate progress and make adjustments as the work progresses. Our annual report will be the way in which we assess the progress of our plan, discuss barriers, and celebrate wins.

For us, success is a Register that genuinely reflects the public health workforce, and a wider system that supports and encourages UKPHR registration.

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