



UK Health
Security
Agency

UKHSA North West

Health Protection Training Prospectus

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1 Training location details

1.1 Name of training location

1.1.1 UK Health Security Agency - North West

1.2 Type of training location

1.2.1 Generalist and specialist health protection public health training.

1.3 Health Protection Placements

1.3.1 Health Protection attachments:

- Core Short-Term attachment (four months whole time equivalent (WTE)) – post MPH and usually undertaken in ST3 or ST4, having passed the Faculty of Public Health Diplomate Examination (DFPH – previously known as the Part A).
- Optional Long-Term Health Protection Placement (two years WTE) - post MPH and having passed the DFPH.

1.3.2 Lead Trainers contact details: -

Role	Email Address
NW Lead Trainer – Kristina Poole	Kristina.Poole@ukhsa.gov.uk
Cheshire & Merseyside – Evdokia (Wicki) Dardamissis	Evdokia.Dardamissis@ukhsa.gov.uk
Cumbria & Lancashire – Matt Pegorie	Janey.Otunnu-Kenyon@ukhsa.gov.uk
Greater Manchester – Liz Stratford	Elizabeth.Stratford@ukhsa.gov.uk

Please also copy the NW-StR email address NW-StRs@ukhsa.gov.uk into any training correspondence.

2 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This prospectus outlines the specialist public health training opportunities available at UKHSA North West and provides details of what specialty registrars (StRs) in public health and other prospective trainees can expect or may want to consider when organizing their attachment.
- 2.1.2 This prospectus should be read in conjunction with the Faculty of Public Health, Public Health Specialty Training Curriculum¹ and Health Education North West Public Health website².

3 UKHSA North West

- 3.1.1 The UK Health Security Agency's (UKHSA) mission is to respond to health threats, save lives and protect livelihoods. We provide intellectual, scientific and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage, to make the nation's health secure.
- 3.1.2 UKHSA health protection teams (HPT) provide specialist public health advice and operational support to NHS, local authorities and other agencies.

Local HPTs lead the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)'s response to all health-related incidents. They provide specialist support to prevent and reduce the impact of:

- infectious diseases
- chemical and radiation hazards
- major emergencies

HPTs can help with:

- local disease surveillance
- maintaining alert systems
- investigating and managing health protection incidents and outbreaks
- implementing and monitoring national action plans for infectious diseases at local level

- 3.1.3 UKHSA North West has three sub-regional bases covering the North West of England:

- Cumbria & Lancashire – based in Preston
- Cheshire & Merseyside – based in Liverpool
- Greater Manchester – based in Manchester

¹ <https://www.fph.org.uk/training-careers/specialty-training/curriculum/>

² https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/Specialty_Schools/Public_Health

3.2 Learning outcomes and organization of placements

3.2.1 All learning outcomes required for StRs can potentially be addressed within UKHSA and working with system stakeholders on programmes of work.

Opportunities available will cover:

- surveillance and assessment of the population's health and well-being
- assessing the evidence of effectiveness of health and healthcare interventions, programmes and services
- policy and strategy development and implementation
- strategic leadership and collaborative working for health
- health and wellbeing
- health protection
- health and social service quality
- public health intelligence
- academic public health
- commitment to environmental sustainability

3.2.2 In January the prospectus is updated for the coming year and shortly afterwards an online 'health protection placement awareness session' is held, all are welcome but this is principally aimed at the next cohort considering a core or long term health protection placement from August. Invites will be shared via the North West School of Public Health. Following the placement awareness session further details can be sought as below:

- **For the 4-month core placement:** any StRs wishing to discuss placement opportunities and timing of their core placement should discuss with their TPD in the first instance
- **For the 2-year long term placement:** the advert for places available for the coming year will be shared via the School of Public Health, which will include details of who to contact for further information.

3.3 Training opportunities

3.3.1 Where possible/relevant, StRs on attachment are given the opportunity to attend:

- Daily health protection morning meetings
- Incident Management and Outbreak Control meetings
- Regional and national health protection teleconferences
- North West health protection team meetings
- Sub-Regional team meetings
- National operations and strategic leadership meetings (as appropriate)
- On-call training sessions
- Other local, regional and national training

3.3.2 StRs will also be encouraged to attend Health Protection Conferences and join other relevant partners fora.

- 3.3.3 UKHSA North West has links to local universities and academic institutions, and StRs may have the opportunity to get involved with teaching or research opportunities with university partners.
- 3.3.4 StRs have opportunities for undertaking regional projects. In addition, there may be opportunities for working with national colleagues on national projects.

3.4 Supervision & Induction

- 3.4.1 Each StR will have an Educational Supervisor. There are a number of accredited Educational Supervisors within the region. The Educational Supervisor will have oversight of StR training needs throughout the StRs time in the training location. In addition, due to the nature of the varied work at UKHSA, other trainers will be available as project supervisors, and people who are not accredited trainers or from other professional groups may also help deliver specific training in areas where they have expertise (in agreement with the Educational Supervisor).
- 3.4.2 The progress of the StR will be monitored throughout the attachment via regular meetings with the educational or project supervisor
- 3.4.3 When StRs start their placement they will undergo an induction programme for approximately two weeks so that they can meet key people and find out what is happening across the region. During this time, along with their Educational Supervisor, they will identify opportunities to meet some of their public health training needs. This will be addressed using a learning agreement to outline projects, timeframes, outcomes and the date of the next review.

3.5 Administration

- 3.5.1 StRs will have use of a UKHSA laptop and headset. Desks at all sites have facilities for linking laptops to a monitor, keyboard and mouse for agile working.
- 3.5.2 Some business administration support may be provided if required, linked to relevant case or project work. Computer software includes Microsoft Office and other packages as appropriate. There is access to journals through library services. All StRs are able to access university libraries using their NHS ID. Teleconference and video conference facilities are available via Microsoft Teams.
- 3.5.3 Usual HR arrangements via the Lead Employer for StRs will be in place during the attachment.

3.6 Location, accessibility and sustainability

- 3.6.1 StRs are usually expected to complete their four-month core health protection training with the sub-regional team within their allocated training zone, any changes to this arrangement are made on an

individual basis in discussion between the relevant StR and sub regional training leads. Since 2022, UKHSA have been operating a hybrid working arrangement, with the majority of staff undertaking a combination of office working and home working (currently staff are expected to work from the office 3 days per week, pro rata). The policy and guidance relating to this remains under review. An update will be provided at the annual placement awareness session and this, along with home working arrangements, will be discussed on an individual basis at the start of the placement.

- 3.6.2 Office locations are fully accessible by a range of transport modes. Sustainable travel, by train, bus, walking or bicycle (mileage reimbursed via the lead employer), is actively encouraged as part of the daily commute and to meetings within the day. Further information is given in Section 6: Appendix.
- 3.6.3 Registrars are encouraged to use journey planning tools including those listed below to support sustainable travel;
 - o <https://www.traveline.info/>
 - o <https://www.google.com/maps>
 - o <https://www.cyclestreets.net/journey/>

4 Health Protection

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 The health protection team (HPT) identifies and responds to health hazards and emergencies caused by infectious disease and environmental hazards. It does this by providing advice and information to the general public, to health professionals such as doctors and nurses, and to national and local government. Furthermore, the health protection team takes action to control sources, break pathways and control receptors to reduce or prevent exposure.
- 4.1.2 During the placement, you will have the opportunity to understand the different roles of UKHSA staff and external partners in the region, and the practical functions of the different roles:
- surveillance of communicable diseases and environmental hazards
 - the role of the various agencies in diagnosis, prevention and control of communicable diseases and environmental hazards
 - the legal basis of communicable disease control and environmental public health
 - the basis of infection control in the community
 - the public health role in emergency planning
 - environmental epidemiology and health risk assessment
- 4.1.3 You can also develop skills in:
- applying surveillance skills in prevention and control of communicable disease and environmental public health
 - investigation of single cases of common communicable diseases
 - investigation of clusters / outbreaks / environmental hazards including the application of appropriate epidemiological methods
 - advising professionals and the public on communicable diseases and potential health effects of environmental hazards
 - identification and management of clusters / outbreaks / health effects of environmental hazards
 - decision making and time management
 - media handling and interview techniques
 - risk assessment

4.2 What type of work might I do?

- 4.2.1 The work available is likely to include:
- managing enquiries relating to and cases and incidents of infectious disease and environmental hazards

- surveillance
- data analysis
- teaching
- audits, such as screening for TB, Review of Chemical Incident Form
- cluster investigation, e.g. alleged cancer clusters
- undertaking literature reviews

4.2.2 See Appendix for examples of recent StR experiences in health protection

4.3 Four-month placement (core)

- 4.3.1 All trainees in the Public Health StR training scheme are required to undertake a core four-month attachment in health protection. The purpose of this placement is to meet the health protection relevant outcomes and to prepare the StR for participation in the out-of-hours health protection rota.
- 4.3.2 Trainees usually need to have passed the DFPH (previously known as the Part A exam) before starting their health protection placement. It is usual to plan ahead, through discussions between the Training Programme Director, the Sub-Regional Lead Trainer and the StR, to agree a provisional date to start the placement, which is usually set, based on the time at which the StR is expected to have passed the DFPH exam.
- 4.3.3 Full time StRs will work the whole time with the health protection team for four months. It is not generally acceptable for StRs to undertake joint placements with other training locations during the short-term placement.
- 4.3.4 Placements for StRs who work less than full-time will be extended so they have four months whole time equivalent experience.

4.4 Two-year placement

- 4.4.1 Long term placements provide more in-depth experience in all aspects of health protection than can be obtained in a four-month attachment. This may include longer placements in related departments, such as with Radiation, Chemicals, Climate and Environmental Hazards (RCCE) Department, the Field Service team (FS) and the Manchester Public Health Laboratory.
- 4.4.3 Up to two longer term StRs can generally be accommodated per UKHSA North West sub regional base at any one time (i.e. a total of six across the North West). Two-year placements are advertised across the North West and are subject to competitive interview.
- 4.4.4 Long-Term placement availability is reviewed annually and subsequently advertised to StRs in the North West.
- 4.4.5 In specific cases, one-year placements may be arranged for StRs who wish to pursue a career in health protection if it is not possible to fit a two-year placement before CCT.
- 4.4.6 **Key contact:** Kristina Poole Kristina.Poole@ukhsa.gov.uk as the NW Lead Trainer is the key contact for the

NW, however the NW-StR email address can also be used to raise any training related questions and should be copied in to all StR training correspondence (NW-StRs@ukhsa.gov.uk).

5 Internal placements and experience

- There are a variety of training experiences/secondments available to StRs on UKHSA attachments, depending on the StR's individual career interests and plans.
- StRs should liaise with their Educational Supervisor and Sub Regional Lead Trainer to plan these training opportunities.

5.1 Field Services (FS)

- 5.1.1 The Field Service (FS) is part of UKHSA Regions directorate and comprises six regional teams, as well as the Real-Time Syndromic Surveillance Team (ReSST), the UK Field Epidemiology Training Programme (FETP) and the Rapid Investigation Team (RIT).
- 5.1.2 Each team has consultant epidemiologists who are accredited Educational Supervisors and can provide specialist training placements for StRs with an interest in infectious disease epidemiology.
- 5.1.3 FS North West can provide a full range of experience in infectious disease epidemiology: outbreak investigation, surveillance work, data management, data analysis, statistics, research methods, and scientific writing and presenting. FS North West works with UKHSA health protection colleagues to provide a health protection service covering infectious diseases and environmental hazards across the area, providing technical support with incident management. FS North West also maintains, manages and reports from several surveillance systems, and is actively involved with academic research.
- 5.1.4 FS North West is also a training location for the UK Field Epidemiology Training Programme (which is not covered in this prospectus, as it has a different entry route and training programme).
- 5.1.5 Key contacts: Tom Innes and Paul Cleary - Thomas.Innes@ukhsa.gov.uk and paul.cleary@ukhsa.gov.uk

5.2 Environmental Hazards and Emergencies Department

- 5.2.1 StRs may wish to undertake experience with the Environmental Hazards and Emergencies Department which is part of Radiation, Chemicals, Climate and Environmental Hazards (RCCE), in the UKHSA Science Group.
- 5.2.2 RCCE provides advice, research and services to protect the public from hazards resulting from exposure to chemicals and poisons, ionising and non-ionising radiation, and other environmental hazards. RCCE's Environmental Hazards and Emergencies (EHE) Department provides authoritative scientific advice to government, the NHS and other bodies about the public health effects of acute and chronic chemicals exposures and the impact of other environmental hazards.
- 5.2.3 Experiences available include

- Responding to chemical and environmental hazard incidents and enquiries, including via the national chemical and environmental hazards duty desk (CEDD), which may pose risk to people's health, through the provision of public health risk assessments
- Providing specialist advice at local and national level on the public health impact of acute and chronic non-infectious environmental exposures
- Supporting complex risk assessments, risk communication and development of the evidence base to support decision making and enable effective public health protection
- Emergency preparedness actions and exercises to test and strengthen incident assessment and response capabilities

6 Appendix

6.1 Location details: Cheshire & Merseyside

- 6.1.1 UKHSA North West's Cheshire & Merseyside office is located in Suite 3B, 3rd Floor, Cunard Building, Water Street, Liverpool, L3 1DS.
- 6.1.2 The Cunard Building is located in Liverpool City Centre, around a 20-minute walk or 10-minute cycle from Lime Street Station, which provides rail connections to Manchester, Preston and nationally. James Street Station is a 5-minute walk and provides local connections to Lime Street Station, the Wirral, Chester and Moorfields (for onward journeys to Southport and South Liverpool). Details of local bus and train timetables can be found at [here](#).
- 6.1.3 Further details about the building location, facilities and nearby car parking can be found [here](#).
- 6.1.4 The key academic links in the region are: University of Liverpool, Liverpool John Moores and the Liverpool School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

6.2 Location details: Cumbria & Lancashire

- 6.2.1 UKHSA North West's Cumbria & Lancashire office is currently located at Lancashire County Council, Pitt Street Reception, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8XB
- 6.2.2 County Hall is opposite Preston railway station, which provides national rail connections to London, Manchester and Liverpool, alongside local services. Many local buses also stop outside County Hall. Local journey planning and details of bus and train timetables can be found [here](#).
- 6.2.3 Secure cycle storage is available at both the railway station and outside County Hall, with changing facilities also available within County Hall. Further details about cycle routes across Lancashire can be found [here](#).
- 6.2.4 The Council operates several Park and Ride sites to help reduce congestion in the city centre, and details of these can be found [here](#).
- 6.2.5 The key academic links in this region are: Edge Hill University, University of Central Lancashire,

University of Cumbria, and University of Lancaster.

6.3 Location details: Greater Manchester

- 6.3.1 UKHSA North West's Greater Manchester office is currently based in 3 Piccadilly Place, London Road, Manchester, M1 3BN.
- 6.3.2 Three Piccadilly Place is located opposite Piccadilly railway station, which provides national and local rail connections. Piccadilly also has a Metrolink stop, providing local tram services. Information on train, tram and bus times and routes, and journey planning can be found [here](#)
- 6.3.3 Secure cycle storage is available at both Manchester Piccadilly Station and on floor of the car below 3 Piccadilly Place, with showers and changing facilities available cycle racks. Bike hire is available from the railway station and more information can be found [here](#).
- 6.3.4 The key academic links in this region are: University of Manchester, and Manchester Metropolitan University.

6.4 Health Protection Experiences: Reflections from North West Specialty Registrars

6.4.1 From StRs undertaking the core 4 month placement:

I recently undertook a four-month placement with the Cheshire and Merseyside Health Protection Team. I was initially nervous as my previous experience of health protection was limited and I was aware there would be a steep learning curve, particularly in relation to duty desk working. At the same time, I was excited to return to a faster-paced working environment as I had missed this aspect from my earlier clinical roles.

The placement provided exposure to both acute and strategic health protection work. A significant proportion of time on the placement is spent on the duty desk as managing cases is a key part of preparing registrars for out-of-hours work. At first, I found the duty desk challenging due to the unpredictable workloads and the need to make rapid decisions. However, the whole team was extremely supportive and the consultants encouraged the registrars to have a low threshold for seeking their advice on a case. This enabled me to build confidence and I quickly became comfortable managing many cases independently. Alongside this, I had the opportunity to undertake project work including contributing to updating the national measles guidance for local authorities and auditing how regional TB teams managed cases of Bovine TB.

Overall, this placement was a highly positive experience which strengthened my skills in the core principles of health

protection including risk assessment, outbreak investigation and partnership working. It has strongly reinforced my interest in pursuing further training in health protection.

Rebecca Kane, ST3, C&M StR

I was quite anxious to move to UKHSA as my rotation fell over the winter months. However, including when it very busy, I never felt unsupported. Even working from home felt like being in an office, as everyone was readily accessible via Teams for a video call or a message. I really valued the regular morning meetings with all the practitioners and consultants, as this promoted the sense of being part of a team and was also a great learning opportunity. I also got chance to attend several UKHSA teaching sessions which introduced broader aspects of the organisation, such as communications and Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR).

One of the best experiences for my professional development was supporting the management of an incident that spanned several weeks. This was a complex and sensitive situation that tested my communication skills with many different stakeholders. I was the point of contact for the care home, the local authority public health team, the microbiology consultant, the hospital infection prevention control (IPC) team, and integrated care board (ICB) colleagues. It was rewarding to see my contribution made a tangible difference. As well as taking part in incident management team (IMT) discussions, the wider multidisciplinary team (MDT) also completed a formal debrief and lessons learned exercise, which was really insightful.

Overall, I have learned a lot and really enjoyed my time at UKHSA and, most importantly, feel well prepared for the on-call rota.

Sophie French, ST3, GM StR

6.4.2 From StRs undertaking the 2-year long term placement

UKHSA Placement and Incident Management

My time within UKHSA has provided invaluable exposure to real-world public health practice, particularly through working on ArcDesk and participating in incident management. Regular involvement in handling incidents has allowed me to develop confidence in responding to complex, time-sensitive situations, often under pressure and with incomplete information. Through this, I have strengthened my ability to assess risk, prioritise actions, and communicate clearly with stakeholders.

Being part of the on-call rota was a significant learning opportunity. It required me to balance competing demands, make proportionate decisions, and exercise professional judgement with increasing autonomy. Over time, I became more confident in leading responses, escalating appropriately, and coordinating with colleagues across teams. This experience enhanced my resilience and reinforced the importance of structured decision-making during high-pressure situations.

The strength of the UKHSA team has been a defining feature of my placement. I have consistently felt supported,

encouraged to ask questions, and trusted to take on responsibility. The culture of openness and shared learning facilitated my integration into the organisation and accelerated my professional development. I benefited greatly from working alongside experienced consultants and specialists who modelled high-quality leadership and collaborative practice.

My involvement in national-level incidents provided further opportunities for growth. These incidents required coordination across regions and organisations, including local authorities, NHS partners, and national bodies. Through this work, I developed a stronger understanding of cross-organisational working, strategic communication, and the complexities of national response systems. These experiences contributed significantly to my leadership development and enhanced my ability to operate within large, multi-agency structures.

Overall, my time within UKHSA has advanced my skills in prioritisation, autonomy, incident management, and professional judgement. It has reinforced the importance of evidence-based practice, timely communication, and strong teamworking in protecting public health.

Field Surveillance (FS)

My work within FS has strengthened my analytical and data-driven approach to public health practice. Engaging with surveillance data, statistical analysis, and reporting processes improved my confidence in interpreting complex datasets and translating findings into meaningful public health insights.

Through FS, I developed a more holistic understanding of population health by linking quantitative data with social, environmental, and service-level factors. This strengthened my ability to view health outcomes within their broader context and to consider upstream determinants when formulating responses.

Working with routine and ad hoc datasets enhanced my skills in data quality assessment, trend analysis, and critical appraisal. I became more comfortable using statistical tools to inform decision-making and support operational and strategic priorities. This experience reinforced the importance of robust surveillance systems in early detection, monitoring, and evaluation.

FS also provided opportunities to collaborate with multidisciplinary teams, including epidemiologists, analysts, and practitioners. This strengthened my appreciation of how different professional perspectives contribute to comprehensive public health responses and reinforced the value of integrated working.

Environmental Hazards and Emergencies

My experience within EHE was particularly valuable in developing my understanding of environmental determinants of health and the practical application of environmental health principles. Working within new teams and engaging with unfamiliar subject areas challenged me to adapt quickly and approach problems from multiple perspectives. Through involvement in environmental incidents and assessments, I learned to consider physical, chemical, biological, and regulatory factors when evaluating risk. This strengthened my ability to take a systematic, evidence-based approach to complex environmental health issues.

I gained experience working with the Duty Environmental (DE) desk and engaging with environmental permitting processes. Reviewing environmental permits and understanding regulatory frameworks enhanced my awareness of how policy, enforcement, and public health intersect. This knowledge has improved my ability to engage constructively with regulatory agencies and industry partners.

Participation in training exercises and simulation events further developed my preparedness for major incidents. These exercises improved my understanding of command structures, escalation pathways, and inter-agency coordination. They also strengthened my confidence in operating within formal incident management systems.

Within EHE, I also contributed to the development of national guidance and documentation. This work improved my skills in policy writing, stakeholder engagement, and consensus building. It reinforced the importance of producing clear, evidence-informed guidance that is accessible to diverse audiences and applicable in operational settings.

Yasir Abdelhadi, ST4, C&L StR