



WARWICK

MEDICAL SCHOOL

# PATHWAYS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKPLACE

## Information for partner organisations

Sharing health and wellbeing knowledge and skills between community and classroom. Activities to promote health and wellbeing do not only take place in hospitals or doctors surgeries. A US study calculates that 80% of factors contributing to a population's health and wellbeing are not related to the clinical care they receive. Although biological factors such as age, sex and our genetic make-up are important, the houses we live in, the education we receive, the food we eat, the jobs we do, the relationships we have with other people and the communities in which we carry out all of these activities make an important difference to our physical and mental health.

**This is the holistic world of public health.**

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The Masters in Public Health (MPH) Programme at the University of Warwick is an interdisciplinary degree course drawing upon expertise across a wide range of subject areas and seeks to explore the complexity of Public Health issues in the UK and internationally. Students are attracted from a variety of backgrounds.

Pathways to the Public Health Workplace is an innovative MPH module which aims to complement students' existing subject specific knowledge and skills with an opportunity to undertake a real world project in collaboration with your organisation.

Students will be offered a competitive optional placement in an organisation with a health and wellbeing role working on an organisation-directed project. Apart from receiving an academic credit, students will enhance their employability and receive valuable feedback on their performance in the workplace. In the longer term both the University and your organisation are set to benefit from the partnership and potential for collaboration it brings.

### HOW DO I BECOME INVOLVED?

Tell us about your project idea:

We are looking for organisations to suggest projects that our MPH students can complete over a flexible 12 week period. Our masters students are a skilled resource and we expect them to make a valued and important contribution to your work as well as learning from working with you.

## WHAT KIND OF PROJECTS ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

This should be a piece of work that is of benefit to your organisation as well as to the student. It should be of the 'real world' with the complexities this sometimes attracts. The students will spend one day a week over a flexible 12 week period working in collaboration with your organisation. All work will be conducted remotely within the current pandemic restrictions, using the preferred medium of Microsoft Teams for communication and project management.

## A MASTERS STUDENT COULD:

- Evaluate a community programme
- Undertake in-depth market research
- Review new products or processes, assist in research and development
- Develop technical solutions
- Undertake critical analysis or small literature review to inform policy and practice
- Write a case study
- Develop communications strategies, websites and social media resources
- Document an organisational or policy change
- Participate in delivery of time-constrained projects
- Develop and evaluate patient information and community outreach activities
- Undertake advocacy work

These are just a few suggestions. The format is flexible and we work with you to ensure your proposal meets the needs of your organisation as well as our students' academic requirements. This individual approach enhances the experience for all.

## PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN BY PREVIOUS STUDENTS

Previous students on the Pathways to the Public Health Workplace module have undertaken exciting and innovative projects.

### For example:

- Evaluation of the usefulness of information collected by various E-health systems in Malawi - **Agency for Scientific Research & Training (ASRT), Malawi**
- Violence reduction unit - evaluation of adverse childhood experiences coordinators - **Public Health England (PHE)**
- Can an academic, educational, interdisciplinary intervention help to solve the time Wellbeing issue among HE students? - **Institute Advanced Teaching and Learning, University of Warwick**
- Understanding Work and Health Challenges for under 25's with a health condition - **West Midlands Combined Authority**
- Holding Time Coventry 2020: City of breastfeeding - **Clinical Trials Unit, University of Warwick**
- How volunteering can support compassionate communities - **South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust**
- Developing screening questionnaires for Refugee and migrants and Assessing health and wellbeing - **Refugee and migrant centre - Black Country and Birmingham**
- Reduction in premature deaths, improving quality of care and promoting respect for the rights, choice and freedoms for older persons - **Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, Australia**
- Developing an audit tool for supporting end of life care in Australia's aged care sector - **MOA, Australia**
- Uganda and The Right to Food: Respecting, Protecting and Fulfilling their State Obligations - **Centre for Health, Human Rights and Development, Kampala, Uganda**
- Pregnant women's perspectives on lifestyle risk factors that could affect the health of mother and baby - **PHE**
- The development of an accreditation system for health and wellbeing hubs in Warwickshire - **Warwickshire Council**
- Evaluation of the Health Impact of a Fuel Poverty Programme in Warwickshire (Advice, and Heating/Insulation Measures Scheme) - **Warwickshire Council**
- Scoping new markets for Reducing Risk Course - **Education for Health, Warwick**
- Choice architecture interventions to promote healthy eating on Warwick campus - **WMS**
- Developing a citizen's panel for disabled people in the West Midlands - **West Midlands Combined Authority**
- Developing a UK case study of prison health governance - **PHE - Health & Justice, Reading**
- Prevalence/Incidence/trends of PH issues in Malawi - **ASRT, Malawi**
- Study design for an Early Child Development study - **ASRT, Malawi**

## HOW DO WE MATCH STUDENTS TO PLACEMENTS?

We ask students to consider their top three choices of placement and as part of the application process, to write a tailored CV and covering letter of their first choice and placement. An interview process will then take place and following this students will be matched to a placement. This is a competitive process and we take an organisation's needs and preferences into account when allocating students.

## THE BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH US

- We have a pool of high calibre postgraduate students from diverse backgrounds to undertake your projects over a flexible 12 week period
- You can help to shape the skills, employability and attributes of tomorrow's graduates.
- Add value to your organisation by engaging with leading researchers and lectures at the award winning University of Warwick
- Participate in improving the Masters in Public Health, and work in partnership with the University of Warwick
- Become part of a diverse network of health and wellbeing organisations working in public health practice, advocacy, policy and academia

## THE PROCESS

### Project Proposal : Anytime

Organisations can propose:

- A specific project title for the students to deliver, or
- A core research theme to be developed into a project by the student, or
- An intended outcome, leaving freedom for the student to design the methodology

### Confirmation of projects: October

The module leads will work with you to refine the proposed topic, ensuring that it meets your organisation's needs as well as the academic needs of the student.

### Allocation of supervisors

The organisation is required to provide a supervisor who:

- Oversees delivery of the project to ensure objectives are being met
- Provide the student with an appropriate induction, project briefing and expected outcomes
- Ensure the student is aware of and complies with legal requirements related to your workplace (as applicable)

### The academic co-supervisor will:

- Be available to students throughout the project
- Ensure the project is on track via regular contact with the student
- Oversee the write up stages

### Student Selection: November

All MPH students are invited to attend an introductory session in November outlining the module and potential placements and receive formal training on making applications and interview skills. Competitive selection via CV and covering letter will take place, followed by interviews of shortlisted candidates and selection of students in November.

### Project agreement: December

All parties to agree terms at the outset to ensure there are agreed key parameters for delivery of the project. These include (but are not limited to):

- Project title, start date and delivery deadline
- Time: how much time the student spends with the organisation is equivalent of one day a week for 12 weeks = 90 hours. Note, students are allocated an additional amount of self-directed hours to complete the project
- Operating procedures and workplace regulations (for example working hours, health and safety procedures etc)
- Outputs of the project
- Intellectual property rights, confidentiality agreements and other checks as necessary

**Project delivery: April**

Students will be expected to produce a 3000 word final report in a format appropriate to your organisation's style, keep a reflective journal throughout the placement and give an oral presentation on their experience reflecting on the process and the skills and experience gained.

Staff who have worked with the student will be asked to complete a simple 360 degree appraisal form and discuss the results with the student on their exit meeting.

Assessment of the final academic output remains the responsibility of the University, but we will ask for your feedback.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS****What do you mean by a public health workplace?**

This opportunity is open to any organisation that has a health and wellbeing role. This includes charities or third sector organisations, non-governmental organisations local authority sponsored projects, organisations such as the fire service or police who have health and wellbeing outreach projects as well as statutory agencies such as Local Authority Public Health Teams, Health Education England West Midlands School of Public Health, and Public Health England.

**We're not located in the West Midlands. Can we take part?**

Yes. Because of the flexible nature of the programme we are keen to accept projects from other areas of the United Kingdom or internationally. Students will remain based in Warwick for the duration of the project but will work remotely, collaborating via email, telephone, internet calls etc. The same framework applies, the project should be suitable for completion in a flexible 12 week period working one day a week.

Many projects can be adapted for this approach for example analysis of pre-collected qualitative or quantitative data with recommendations for policy; policy or literature reviews; internet interviews could be conducted; questionnaire studies developed; materials developed for teaching or health improvement projects; website development etc.

**What does a flexible 12 week period mean?**

We expect our students to be working collaboratively with you for 12 weekly sessions. It may be that the project demands more than one session a week or that the student has to be present in classes for another module and so is unavailable that week. We expect that overall the time spent working with you is 90 hours with another 95 hours available for self-directed work on the project write up, reflective diary etc. The allocated time for the project is between January and April.

**Is this work experience?**

Yes, but this is a different kind of experience. Students are expected to undertake a dedicated piece of work, which they can write up and submit a report or an agreed outcome. There must be achievable aims and learning objectives and we will discuss these with you prior to the project starting.

**How much supervision do I need to give? Will I have help?**

Each student will have a university based co-supervisor who will be available to monitor progress, but it is expected that the students will be able to self-lead upon the project. Your organisation has its own core knowledge and experience in taking your projects forward. Your nominated supervisor will give the project briefing, oversee the project development, be able to discuss the student's progress and performance, and be as involved as you wish to be. Experience shows that closer collaborations are satisfying and more successful for all involved. For quality assurance purposes, minimum levels of supervisory input must be fully agreed prior to the start of the project.

**WHAT WILL THE STUDENT GAIN?**

- The opportunity to apply their postgraduate learning to a workplace environment with the new experiences and challenges that brings
- The opportunity to develop new skills and reinforce previously acquired knowledge
- To build, maintain and end working relationships and appreciate their importance in successful project management
- To experience workplace practice
- To reflect on the integration of university and workplace and apply their new learning in the remainder of the MPH course and professional life

## WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY

"The Pathways module was an invaluable experience of working in public health." **Pathways student 2017**

"This is the only module to actively improve employability and try to give new experiences to students." **Pathways student 2017**

"I think if you are looking for a snippet of what it would be like to work in the real public health environment this module is the one you need to pick, because the available placements are all from highly regarded institutions or organisations and they are really well equipped to give you the knowledge and the skills that you need for your future progress in terms of careers. And generally it gives you a chance to network with other people in the organisation and these are the people that you wouldn't necessarily have access to as an outsider." **Pathways student 2018**

"I really enjoyed the placement... learning to working remotely was really useful in these times." **Pathways student 2019**

## GET IN TOUCH

If you are interested in finding out more about how your organisation and get involved with setting up a project with our MPH students please contact:

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