

UKPHR Mentor programme information

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Health Talks Public Health Training and Consultancy

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“At the heart of mentoring is a relationship based on trust and mutual regard where a colleague uses their expertise and knowledge to support the development of the mentee”

We have a structured programme of support for practitioners working towards professional registration with the UKPHR.

In particular, providing the space and time for a practitioner to have a more hands on approach to addressing the standards and how to apply these to the real world, and being available to inspire and encourage the practitioner to overcome challenges they may face in completing their portfolio.

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Overview of our mentor programme

This guide is for mentors working in public health settings (local authorities, NHS organisations, UKHSA & OHID). It aims to,

Outline the use of mentors as part of the package of support to practitioners on the NW, Mids and EofE schemes

Guide suitable mentors who are working in a mainstream public health role

Create a small pool of mentors available for practitioner who are unable to find themselves a local public health mentor E.g. those not working in a mainstream Public Health role.

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The role of the Mentor is to:

Facilitate the process of self-directed learning of the practitioner throughout the portfolio development process (this may include the points below)

Facilitate / give advice on how standards may be demonstrated, and helping identify relevant development opportunities for filling competency gaps

Informally review evidence and sections of draft commentaries providing advice and guidance through a dialogue with the mentee. This may include: advising on how to address a standard; Supporting the practitioner to choose appropriate evidence; critiquing draft standards to strengthen their submission.

Helping the practitioner address any clarifications they receive following assessment

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Requirements

The requirements for taking on the role of scheme Mentor are as follows:

✓Working in a Public Health role at, or more senior to, Public Health Professional registration level.

✓Familiar with the UKPHR practitioner standards e.g., as a practitioner or assessor or verifier.

✓Commitment to supporting a practitioner over the 18 months of their journey towards registration.

✓We encourage practitioners working in a mainstream public health role to find their own mentor. We aspire to have a small pool of mentors that we can match up with those unable to find their own.

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Process

Mentors are likely to carry out this role in a voluntary capacity whilst juggling busy work loads and personal lives. Practitioners and mentors need to establish an agreement at the outset of what they hope to achieve from the process.

- An initial online meeting with your practitioner to enable you to get to know each other, explore their needs and agree how you are going to work together
- Thereafter you will need to agree the meeting frequency and the logistics (contact details, face to face or via Teams). In the early stages we suggest approximately 1 hour every 4-8 weeks and then decrease the frequency as they progress through their portfolio.
- The sessions are intended to focus on a practitioner's portfolio. This might involve clarifying what is meant by a standard, how to address it or find suitable evidence; helping develop your writing style or unpicking any clarifications.
- The sessions are not aimed at providing further mentoring support with regard to career development or broader discussions where support can be found through your organisations learning and development department.

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What practitioners can expect

Willingness and commitment to support the practitioner in developing their portfolio.

A mentor will not ‘mark’ a commentary but may provide support and guidance as to how to strengthen application, knowledge or evidence of a standard.

The practitioner needs to work with you to create a mutually agreed contract for the mentoring relationship to clarify expectations and how to communicate.

A safe and confidential environment for the practitioner reflect on their practice and how to apply this to the portfolio.

Encouragement, support, a fresh perspective and advice.

Feedback that is both challenging and empathic.

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What mentors can expect

A commitment to making the most of the support on offer and aim to be open and honest about themselves and their needs.

Have realistic expectations and share and agree these with the mentor

Take the initiative to schedule the first meeting with the mentor after the commentary writing workshop, (and then agree how future meetings will take place).

Prepare in advance of meetings, identifying what you would like to use the session for to make best use of the opportunity.

Send any pieces of work that they would like to discuss with the mentor in advance of a meeting; clarifying what support they require e.g. “ I am struggling with standards ….; I am not sure how to address clarifications…” (it is not reasonable to expect a mentor to read a whole commentary)

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Example questions

Tell me a little about yourself (and reciprocate),

What is your understanding of mentoring? / Have you had mentoring before? What was helpful to you?

How do you learn / think best? What can I, as mentor, do to help stretch you?

Will our meetings be structured? How?

What do you hope to gain from this mentoring relationship?

How often would you like to meet? Who will lead on organising this? (Online / face to face; preferred days, length etc)

How will we contact each other?

How will we deal with difficulties?

Meeting notes

- We recommend keeping brief notes of each meeting which can be written up by the practitioner

In Confidence (completed by the Practitioner)

Mentee :

Mentor:

Date / Time:

Venue:

Preparation work by mentee

Issues discussed

Learning gaps

Action required including deadline

Summary / other

Developing new skills

Supporting others is a key component of senior leaders' responsibilities and being a mentor to a practitioner completing a retrospective portfolio is an excellent opportunity to develop these skills.

Supporting your practitioner will also help to gain insight into your own professional practice and the UKPHR standards which support quality in public health practice.

Consider undertaking the UKPHR Assessor or Verifier training – this helps embed registration in an organisation and supports a culture of learning and development "growing your own" professionally registered workforce.

There are some great resources which can help develop your mentoring skills

Coaching and Mentoring – Leadership Academy

HEE elfh Hub (e-lfh.org.uk)

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For further support or guidance for either mentor or practitioner, please email the scheme coordinator alix@healthtalks.org.uk

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