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# **EoE Public Health Training Programme**

# **Placement Allocation Policy – v. 5 (July 2022)**

1. **Overview**

The Public Health Training programme in the East of England is funded by the health system (currently HEE) to meet the specialist public health workforce requirements in the East of England. Whilst specialists may end up working in any setting, most individuals completing public health specialty training move into roles in local government or regional roles within national public health organisations. The purpose of the regional training programme is to train generalist specialists for the local system according to the Faculty of Public Health’s curriculum.

It is a requirement of the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) curriculum that all Specialty Registrars (StRs) are exposed to a variety of organisations and learning environments to acquire a broad understanding of public health practice.

The East of England Public Health Specialty Training Programme has accredited training locations spread across a variety of locations including:

* Local Authorities (LA)
* NHS organisations
* Regional offices of the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)
* Academic departments at the University of Cambridge and the University of East Anglia

The geographical delivery of the Public Health Specialty Training Programme (PHTP) is organised into a North and a South zone. The North zone covers the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire (including Peterborough), and Bedfordshire (including Luton Unitary Authority). The South zone covers the counties of Essex (including Thurrock and Southend Unitary Authorities), and Hertfordshire. There is also a ‘central pool’ of regional placements in the Cambridge area that are equally accessible by both North and South zone registrars.

This policy outlines the process for allocating placements, to ensure that all registrars have equal opportunity to request specific placements.

1. **Principles for allocating placements**

The allocation / agreement of all placements includes consideration of:

* **The educational needs of the registrar.** These include:
* The requirements/recommendations within the [Faculty of Public Health (FPH) curriculum](https://www.fph.org.uk/training-careers/specialty-training/curriculum/).
* Progress against the FPH curriculum (exam milestones, learning outcomes, multi-source feedback etc.).
* Recommendations from ARCP panel and, if appropriate, Key Area 10 panel.
* Career aspirations (e.g. health protection)
* Matching specific learning needs with learning environment and/or supervisor expertise.
* **The availability of accredited Clinical Supervisors within training locations** (accredited CSs should normally supervise a maximum of 3 GP or PH registrars in total).
* **Any reasonable adjustments that are required by individual registrars**
* **The need to ensure an equitable and transparent approach to allocations**

Critical and unpredicted service needs may require that these considerations are temporarily overridden on an exceptional basis e.g. as occurred during the 2020-22 Covid-19 pandemic.

1. **Phase 1: First placement**

Specialty Registrars start their training by applying to either the North zone or South zone. The PHTP guarantees that registrars will remain within this zone for the duration of training if they wish. In practice, no registrar has been asked to move to the other zone, although some have chosen to. Registrars may formally change base once during training.

On successful application to the EoE PHTP, in accordance with the FPH curriculum, registrars are first allocated to a training location in a Local Authority and will remain there for the first 24-30 months of training – phase 1. Local authority placements will be determined through the following process:

Local authorities will be asked in around May each year at the specialty training committee meeting whether they are in a position to accept 1 or 2 registrars from the new intake starting the following August. Preference will be given to local authorities that:

* Are able to accommodate 2 registrars. Depending on capacity, a single ST1/2 registrar may be placed in a local authority if there is a more senior registrar at that location who can act as a ‘buddy’ for a minimum of 4 months
* Have not had new registrars (ST1/2) starting the previous year. Based on the current numbers of registrars this would mean all local authorities have an opportunity to host registrars every two years and so will benefit from a largely continuous presence of ST1/2 registrars.

In addition there will need to be an even balance of placements between the North and South zone.

Incoming registrars will be asked to share their rankings with the programme and express a preference for a local authority. Placements will be allocated based on registrar preference. Where a placement is oversubscribed then allocation will be based on ranking (higher ranking takes priority). Placements will not usually be offered in local authorities where individuals have worked previously.

Academic Clinical Fellows (ACFs) undertake a mixed academic and service placement with the academic component being delivered at either the University of Cambridge or the University of East Anglia (Norwich). This will not necessarily mean that their local authority placement will be in the same location, but consideration will be given to commuting times between service and academic locations.

*NB The main base of the public health team in the allocated local authority will be the registrar’s main base for employment purposes during phase 1. Commuting time is outside of work hours and does not attract travel expenses. Irrespective of ways of working (e.g. remote working), registrars, as with any employee, may be required to physically attend their main employment base for work purposes following the local authority’s policy for its own employees*

1. **Phase 1: Health protection placements**

All registrars must rotate through a health protection placement for a minimum of 3 months (full time equivalent).

The allocation of health protection placements is made by the Health Protection Lead to ensure that all registrars are able to rotate through the team in the first 18-36 months of training (phase 1). Registrars can undertake a taster week if they plan to take their professional exams before they take up their HPT attachment.

1. **Phase 2 placements**

After completion of DFPH and health protection attachment, registrars transition to phase 2 (usually after 24-30 months in a Local Authority).

* Placements in phase 2 can be of any length but are typically 6-12 months.
* A list of available placements is available on the GMC website and PHREE regularly updates a ‘Rough guide to placements’ with information from those who have previously trained there.
* Registrars should discuss, their learning needs and outstanding learning outcomes which need to be addressed with their Educational Supervisor (ES) and identify potential placement preferences.
* Registrars should approach potential accredited supervisors in proposed placements to identify upcoming projects or opportunities which would address their learning outcomes.
* Placement panels are twice yearly. Proposals for a placement move should be submitted to the Placement Panel with 3-6 months before the proposed move
* Registrars are encouraged to plan their placements early in discussion with their ES. They may wish to consult others. Registrars considering a career in Health Protection are encouraged to discuss this with the Health Protection lead around the time of their mandatory HP placement.
* Occasionally there is reason to move placements outside the placement panel timetable. This can occur if there is no longer clinical supervision in placement or the expected placement opportunities are not being realised. These can be approved by the TPD if there is clear educational reason to move, the move is in line with the principles of the placement panel, and the move will not disadvantage another registrar.
* The final 6-12 months of training (ideally 12) should be spent in the setting in which the registrar expects to seek a first consultant post, which will generally be a local authority. This is to allow registrars in their final year to prepare for consultant practice by taking ongoing responsibility for areas of work rather than mainly delivering shorter project based work.

1. **Out of programme placements (OOP)**

All learning outcomes can be achieved in programme and by the end of training. By the end of training registrars should have experienced the environments in local government, a health protection team, a health setting\*, and a regional team. All registrars who are progressing satisfactorily through training are encouraged to consider a specialist placement for 4-6 months in ST3/4 e.g. national placements National placements are likely to be required for registrars intending a career in Health Protection. Registrars considering a career in Health Protection are asked to discuss this with the programme Lead for Health Protection at the time of their mandatory placement.

National and some other placements e.g. PhD training require that the registrar goes ‘out of programme’ (OOP).

*\* Health settings include commissioning organisations such as Clinical Commissioning Groups and Integrated Care Systems, and NHS provider organisations such as community or acute Trusts. These could be combined with a local authority placement as many teams work closely together.*

‘Out of programme’ (OOP) placements will be considered in line with the Gold Guide <https://www.copmed.org.uk/gold-guide-8th-edition/> (9th edition from 3rd August 2022) and HEE EoE policy (<https://heeoe.hee.nhs.uk/faculty-educators/out-programme-oop/out-programme-policy> )

* The Gold Guide notes a range of OOP options – OOPR (for research, which usually does not contribute to training time), OOPC (for career break), OOPE (for clinical experience, not necessarily relevant to the training specialty the registrar is engaged in), or OOPT. The placement panel would only need to consider requests which will contribute to training time.
* Time out of programme is a privilege and is granted on an individual basis at the discretion of the Training Programme Director, Head of School and HEE. Registrars seeking out of programme placements will be expected to have completed phase 1, including MFPH, and be able to demonstrate satisfactory progress in training (including an outcome 1 at their most recent ARCP) before taking up an OOP.
* OOPT will normally be for a period of up to one year.
* Only one period of OOP other than for statutory leave will normally be allowed.
* Out of programme placements will not normally be agreed in the last year of training according to HEE policy, unless this is an ‘acting-up’ opportunity. See AUC EoE policy.
* Registrars seeking OOP placements will need to gain approval from the TPD and then complete the HEE form (usually 6 months ahead of a proposed placement). The FPH must prospectively approve all overseas training applications and all non-GMC OOP placements if it is requested that they will count towards training. **Non-Faculty approved placements will not count towards the issuing of a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) and therefore the salary will not be paid by the Lead Employer**.

**Placement Panel – Terms of Reference and process**

**The placement panel was established to ensure fairness in case of competition for limited places, transparency of decision making, and to inform educational supervisors’ advice to registrars.** Placement panel will meet twice a year (usually April & October).

* Invitations to panel members will include HoS, TPDs and all educational supervisors.
* Any panel member who is an ES for the registrar under discussion must recuse themselves from the discussion.
* Panel will be considered quorate with three panel members, one of which must be a TPD (to ensure at least two panel members for registrars whose ES is on the panel).
* Registrars must submit an online placement form to placement panel twice a year from ST2 onwards even if they are not proposing to move. This form must include all the information which the registrar believes is relevant for the panel. This serves as an audit of placements and supervisors to enable the programme to demonstrate governance and quality assurance for all current placements.
* For all registrars who are requesting a placement move, a first and second choice should be submitted. This should include reasons for the request.
* Requests for a placement move should be made 3-6 months in advance of the proposed placement date.
* Placement moves will only be considered one move ahead.

Placement panel decisions will be made in accordance with the principles outlined in section 2 of the EoE PHTP Placement Policy. In addition:

* Placement moves for the coming 6-12 months will be considered across the programme
* The nature and duration of each registrar’s previous placements are considered with the intention of supporting all registrars to gain a breadth of experience as required by the curriculum.
* Where there is competition for a placement, preference will be given to registrars currently within that zone. If possible, consideration will be given to whether there is sufficient capacity for more than one to be supervised, whether accommodations can be made to share the opportunity (e.g. several shorter placements), and the availability of second choice placements.
* On occasions it will be necessary for the panel to consider the needs of the training programme and individual training locations. These factors will be variable but may include:
  + The service needs of training locations
  + Local factors which may impact on an organisation’s ability to offer a suitable learning environment
  + A desire to maintain an approximately even balance of registrars across the programme

**After Placement Panel**

* The Training Programme administrator will contact all registrars within 2 weeks of the panel to inform them of an approved Placement Panel decision. Most placements are approved. Sometimes an adjustment may be proposed. It is rare for a placement not to be approved. Where a placement has not been approved the registrar should discuss with their ES and then the TPD if necessary.
* Registrars wishing to further understand the decision itself or who want to challenge the decision on the basis of new evidence which was not available to the panel should contact the TPD to discuss. The TPD may overturn the decision on the basis of this new information, reconvene the placement panel, or uphold the original decision. If the registrar does not want to accept this decision, then the TPD will refer the request to the HoS.
* Once a placement has been approved, the registrar is expected to liaise with the training location lead to agree a start date and their named Clinical Supervisor. The registrar must inform the Training Programme via [phschool.eoe@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:phschool.eoe@hee.nhs.uk) once a start date and named (accredited) CS has been confirmed to update training records.

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