The public health workforce includes staff from a wide range of organisations and agencies across the NHS, local government and other sectors.

Public health practice spans the 3 domains of health improvement, health protection and health and social care quality. The delivery of public health extends from health promotion and health improvement to tackling the wider/social determinants of health, measures to protect health and ensuring effective evidence based commissioning of health and social care services.

The public health workforce includes:

- the wider workforce who have a role in improving health and reducing inequalities e.g. teachers, social workers, housing officers
- front line public health practitioners e.g. health visitors, school nurses, community development workers and environmental health officers
- public health consultants and specialists who provide strategic leadership to the public health effort
- academics who contribute research evidence on what works to improve health.
The Public Health Workforce development strategy is about building up a vision to strengthen the capacity (headcounts) and capability (skills and competence) across these groups, in order to meet public health goals.

The Workforce development strategy is also about matching workforce numbers and functions to public health need, including the needs highlighted by new policy developments e.g. *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say.*
WHAT WE HAVE DONE SINCE 
CHOOSING HEALTH

- Developed a comprehensive career framework for public health which is competency based and can be applied to the whole range of public health roles across NHS and non-NHS organisations.

- Strengthen leadership for public health across the wider workforce, including at senior levels of organisations through the provision of dedicated programmes.

- Supported the modernisation of competence based public health specialist training and assessment programmes.

- Established 9 regional ‘teaching public health networks’ to strengthen the public health skill building across undergraduate, postgraduate and lifelong learning programmes of study offered by the higher and further education sectors.

- Highlighted the contribution and training and career development needs of the health improvement/health promotion workforce through the publication of ‘Shaping the Future of Public Health: Promoting health in the NHS’.

- Established a plan to increase school nurse capacity and modernise their roles through the publication of ‘School Nurse: Practice Development Resource Pack’ and ‘Looking for a school nurse?’

- Increased public health specialist capacity through top up training for specialists who are competent across all 3 domains of public health, as well as for specialists with expertise in specific and highly complex areas of public health practice.

- Developed the skills of the wider workforce to undertake public health roles e.g. engaging with pharmacists to increase their health improvement work with the local community.

- Improving public health skills in key health care professions such as sexual and reproductive health workforce, sports and exercise medicine and dentistry.

- Funded additional F2 training posts for medical graduates to increase exposure to public health principles early in their careers.

- Established Sports and Exercise Medicine as a speciality discipline.

WHERE WE ARE HEADING

Building on the current developments we are planning to:

- Strengthen the competence of the workforce to tackle the whole range of lifestyle and social determinants of health. Including on the one hand issues such as nutrition and physical activity, and on the other, planning future transport and built environment which are conducive to health improvement.

- Embed public health into the commissioning agenda of the NHS.

- Work with the regulators to review how regulation may be strengthened and improved for the whole public health workforce.

WE WILL HAVE DELIVERED IF

- We have a well trained and highly motivated public health workforce who can deliver on the national priorities for health.

- Other professionals and agencies are engaging with and contributing fully to improving and protecting health and improving the quality of health and social care.