

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH
SCIENCES

PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICINE SPECIALIST TRAINING
AT STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

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PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICINE SPECIALIST TRAINING

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General Program Description

The Division of Community Health within the Department of Interdisciplinary Health Sciences offers a four year training program, MMed in Public Health Medicine, leading to specialist registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). In the program, candidates will be trained in health management, service and research skills through a combination of formal course work, attachments for experiential learning and self-directed learning.

Training objectives at the University of Stellenbosch encompass the syllabus requirements of the College of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA). These syllabus requirements are available on the CMSA website under the College of Public Health Medicine, FCPHM (SA)

Trainees participate in modular training as part of the Masters (MSc) Program in Clinical Epidemiology (Fundamentals of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Diagnosis and Screening modules) and Masters (M Phil) Program in Health Systems, Services Research (Introduction to HSSR and Economic evaluation of health care modules) and the Postgraduate Diploma in Occupational Medicine. Health leadership and management training will be secured either internally or through our partners. Additional structured supplementary teaching and seminars are also provided.

Attachments to the Health Impact Assessment directorate with the Chief Directorate Strategy and Health Support at the Provincial Health Head Office, and other public service partners are aimed at exposing candidates to the full scope of Public Health Medicine practice.

Experience with service and public health surveillance functions, and management and administrative structures, is provided by the allocation of tasks and projects to candidates by health service managers. Public Health Medicine registrars in non-provincial posts will acquire the range of experiential learning in their organizations as will have been planned with the organization prior to starting the rotation. Where appropriate, an exchange rotation of a non-provincial and provincial registrar will be considered to ensure that a full range of experiences is available to all registrars. There will also be attachments to research, teaching and service functions carried out by Divisional staff, where appropriate.

In order to allow senior registrars (registered for Year 4 of the training program) to pursue areas of special interest or skill, a degree of flexibility in the allocation of service attachments may be possible. Such arrangements are subject to the staffing and service demands placed on the Department by PGWC (Health) or by the non-provincial employer, have to meet the training objectives of the course and require approval by the MMed program convener and Head of Division.

By the end of the program, candidates will be expected to demonstrate defined competencies in the various components of Public Health Medicine listed in the CMSA Regulations. See the attached Regulations for the Scope of Skills expected from the

Candidate which should be used to ensure that the rotations provide the necessary experience to meet these competencies. The College of Public Health Medicine, Division of Public Health Medicine assesses competency through one set of exams (no first, second or third parts) as well as a portfolio of learning activities submitted at the time of examination.

Requirements for Specialist Registration in Public Health Medicine with the Health Professions Council of South Africa

To undertake training as a registrar in Public Health Medicine, candidates must:

- Have held an MB,ChB degree or equivalent qualification deemed sufficient by this University for at least three years prior to application
- Have the appropriate registration with the HPCSA which allows them to be trained as specialists. They must be registered in the category: Independent Practitioner (general practitioner) or in the category of Postgraduate Studies (supernumerary).
- Supernumerary registrars must note that they will not be allowed to register as a Specialist: Public Health Medicine with the Health Professions Council of South Africa after successful completion of their MMed degree. They will however be allowed as a Fellow to the CMSA.
- Be registered (for the full period of specialisation) for the MMed degree in Public Health Medicine with the University.

To write one's College exams in Public Health Medicine, candidates must:

- a. Have completed three years of training time in an approved training post, with appropriate exposure to Public Health Medicine practice, as judged from the candidate's portfolio and confirmed by the Head of Division. [Please note that all registrars will be required to develop a portfolio of work for formative assessment, which is submitted when applying to write your College exam.]
- b. Have, to the satisfaction of the Head of Division mastered at least 75% of the "skills" listed in Appendix A, Section 3, of the Regulations for Admission to the Fellowship of the College of Public Health Medicine
- c. Have submitted a MMed dissertation in Public Health to the University, and obtain a pass mark, in order to enter the College Fellowship Examinations.
- d. Have submitted a "short report" to the College of Public Health Medicine for external examination.
- e. Submit required documentation to the CMSA as outlined in section 16.2 of the Regulations, including certification by the Head of Department confirming (a) to (c) above, an electronic copy of a short report on an Public Health topic, a letter from the Registrar of the candidate's University (or an academic transcript) stating the mark awarded for the MMed dissertation, marked by at least two external examiners and a proposed field/topic for discussion during the oral discourse examination.

To be registered as a specialist in Public Health Medicine with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, candidates must:

- Have completed at least four years of registrar training time in an approved training post as confirmed by the Head of Division of Community Health at Stellenbosch University.
- Have successfully passed the dissertation component of the M Med degree at Stellenbosch University.
- Have obtained a Fellowship in the College of Public Health Medicine by successfully completing the College examinations.

This examination process is described in the Regulations attached. If a student has not successfully completed the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA): Division of Public Health Medicine, examination after 4 years of training time, the extension of training time and continuation of employment in a registrar post, will only be considered on grounds of a written request (with valid reasons) to the Postgraduate Program Committee of the Division of Community Health.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of the quality and quantity of the work output of candidates will be performed by the mentor/supervisor of each registrar, service supervisors (PGWC Health and non-provincial, where relevant) and SU academic staff, and it is incumbent upon the candidates to demonstrate adequate attendance and performance in terms of the list of expectations that follow below.

Academic Expectations of Registrars

1. Teaching in the Medical Student Undergraduate Program

Registrars are expected to participate in undergraduate teaching including teaching selected sessions in epidemiology, research methods and other aspects of Public Health, participating as examiners in OSCE exams and providing guidance to students regarding their community projects. Registrars who enter the program will first shadow an experienced teacher/lecturer before being asked to teach or supervise on their own. The Division of Community Health will also organize training in teaching methods and delivery for new registrars, where applicable. The quantum of teaching and supervision will usually be modest and compatible with registrars' service commitments.

2. **Participating in the Postgraduate Diploma In Occupational Medicine (DOM), the Masters MSc) in Clinical Epidemiology and the Masters (MPhil) in Health Systems and Services Research**

Registrars are expected to participate selectively (as prescribed) in the above mentioned programs as some content of these courses is part and parcel of the MMed programme for Public Health Medicine specialization and provides the formal teaching to cover the College syllabus. This includes attending the prescribed lectures and other coursework, and completing all prescribed tests, assignments and examinations. They may, if they wish, and administrative arrangements permit, choose elective modules within the Masters programs as a vehicle to complete their short report or their MMed dissertation which are part of the College examinations.

Registrars will obtain the SU MMed degree, which is an academic qualification, as well as the College Fellowship which is a professional qualification, upon successful completion of the specialist training programme, but will not be awarded any of the three above-mentioned academic qualifications from which they obtained their coursework as part of MMed training, as University policy prohibits multiple (simultaneous/parallel) academic program registrations. Registrars can be provided with a Certificate of Attendance (short course) which they may use for Curriculum Vitae purposes as evidence of having completed prescribed and elective modules of these programs.

It is a requirement of our MMed training programme that all registrars undertake the following modules of the Masters in Clinical Epidemiology:

Fundamentals of Epidemiology
Biostatistics I
Biostatistics II
Introduction to health systems and services research
Economic evaluation of health care
Diagnosis and screening
Research proposal writing and grantsmanship

Other elective (non-compulsory) modules include:

Systematic reviews and meta-analysis

Registrars are released from their service attachments to attend the above modules. These modules are taught during 1-2 week long intensive teaching blocks.

One Tuesday per month, (the entire day) is regarded as an academic Divisional day for registrars, which should be utilized for teaching, academic meetings, self-study and research activities. Certain time slots, as arranged with the Province, will be used for academic purposes.

Provincial and other employers have accepted that you have academic commitments on Tuesdays. Consequently, all academic meetings (e.g. M Med programme meetings) should be arranged for Tuesdays, whenever possible. Service activities that impact on Tuesday academic time are to be avoided as far as possible. Registrars should take responsibility for ensuring that this is the case, failing which the MMed convenor should be notified, with clear explanation, timeously of registrars' inability to attend academic activities.

3. Attending Divisional Meetings

Registrars are expected to attend the following regular Divisional activities related to teaching and administration:

- **Monthly Divisional meeting**, every last Tuesday morning of each month, from 09h30 till 11h00
- **Community Health Divisional Journal club** between 13h00 and 14h00, every last Tuesday morning of each month.
Registrars are expected to present at journal club meetings at allocated intervals (see the separate document on what is expected of those presenting at journal club meetings) and engage with colleagues' presentations.

Participation in the Journal Clubs is mandatory. Apologies must be motivated and emailed to Rolene Langford.

Registrars will also have opportunities for other learning activities, which you are strongly encouraged to make use of:

- Supplementary tutorials in preparation for examination on ad hoc basis - registrars may have tutorial sessions in preparation for examination to supplement formal course learning. Each registrar will have a turn to present a seminar on a particular topic, aimed at preparing for the College Fellowship examinations and oral exams. Different consultants will support the registrars presenting, depending on the topic, and provide feedback at the seminars to help registrars prepare for their exams.
- Registrars are also encouraged to attend and participate in the Public Health Seminars (Hot Topics) organized by the Division of Community Health or sessions organized for Doctoral and Masters students to present their dissertation proposals. This will be helpful to registrars planning to develop their proposals for their MMed theses.

4. Academic supervision and support

Each registrar will be allocated an academic mentor for the duration of their training period. The role of the academic mentor is to provide general academic guidance to the registrars in terms of their Public Health experience and learning and to ensure that the registrar has the exposure and learning opportunities to enable him or her to master the competencies expected by the College of Public Health Medicine. This means that the academic mentor will:

- Assist the registrar in drawing up their learning objectives at the start of each rotation, along with the relevant service mentor;
- Provide feedback (and sign-off) to the registrar on their portfolio of learning as part of regular formative assessment
- Participate in the registrar's provincial performance management system (known in the Provincial System as the Staff Performance Management System or SPMS) with their service supervisor.
- Generally provide guidance to the registrar for any service and academic queries or assist in identifying other staff who have the relevant expertise and who can be of assistance for a service task required of the registrar.

In addition to an academic mentor role, the registrar may also have a supervisor who supervises their MMed dissertation. The supervisor need not be the registrar's mentor if the registrar's thesis is in a particular area where a different supervisor has particular expertise.

Lastly, registrars may be asked to undertake work which leads to research activities that will not be part of their MMed dissertation but which requires a staff member's support other than that of their mentor. In this case, the relevant consultant or staff member will also assist the registrar where needed.

However, the primary academic relationship will be with the allocated mentor, even if a different consultant is your thesis supervisor or is giving you guidance for a particular project. This consultant will confirm your rotation's Job Description with the service supervisor, sign off your Portfolio and participate in your performance management (SPMS for provincial registrars).

5. Participating in Departmental Research

Registrars are encouraged to participate in Divisional research activities. Depending on your research interests (for your MMed dissertation or your short report) you may be allocated to appropriate staff members who may not be your regular academic mentor. It is recommended that you aim at completing a number of substantive projects, two of which

you would use towards your College research requirements, one as your MMed Dissertation and one as the Fellowship short report.

6. **Additional Resources**

Registrars may use and update the College Requirements Spreadsheet to assist them in keeping track of portfolio progress.

WCG service department's expectations of registrars

1. Structure and location of the Health Department at WCG

The Public Health (including Public Health Health) functions within the Health Department of the PGWC have largely been concentrated in a dedicated Chief Directorate: Strategy and Health Support (CD: SHS).

This CD reports directly to the Head of Health and includes four directorates. Should a registrar in Public Health Medicine be placed within the Health Department of PGWC it will usually be in the Health Impact Assessment Directorate (including Epidemiology & Disease Surveillance, Programme Impact Evaluation, Quality Assurance and Health Research).

2. Providing Service through Health Service Attachments And Rotations

When placed in a rotation, registrars will be managed from the provincial side by a Specialist in Public Health Medicine.

Day-to-day liaison and accountability for project and service work, however, will depend on the nature of the attachment.

For non-provincial registrars, similar service and performance monitoring arrangements will be developed specific to the organization involved.

3. Governance of the registrar service attachment

The registrar programme is located in the context of a set of governance arrangements between SU and the WCG Health Department.

- There is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place governing the relationships between the WCG and the Higher Education Institutions of the Western Cape including the training of registrars.
- At institutional level, a Joint Standing Advisory Committee (JSAC), which includes incl. senior leadership in the Faculty and Province, oversees the institutional relationships and strategic issues.
- Where non-provincial registrars are in the programme, the Programme Convener will set up equivalent meetings with the employing organization using a similar MOU to regularize the governance of the registrar service attachment.

Registrar appraisal

Registrars are appraised in two ways.

The CMSA Portfolio is the registrar's record of learning for purposes of College academic assessment. **ALL** registrars must keep a CMSA PHM portfolio up to date throughout their training. This is a single document in which Section 4 needs to be added for each rotation undertaken by the registrar. Your mentor will assist you with completing it. 6 Monthly appraisals must be submitted electronically to the MMed program convener, with every performance appraisal completed. The skills list of the CPHM (see separate document) must be checked off to ensure that all of the requisite competencies are required by the end of registrar training. This is needed for College examination purposes. Whilst providing service to the health department or to their non-provincial employer, each registrar is required by the College of Public Health Medicine to keep as part of this portfolio a record of their practical work. Published and unpublished written reports on project or other work, oral presentations and reports from staff for whom the registrar is responsible, will all form part of this appraisal. Copies of all such reports should also be filed with the MMed Programme Convener for use in formative assessments. This portfolio is required in order for the Head of the Division to certify that registrars are competent with respect to practical work in Public Health Medicine, before the final examination. Registrars will be required to bring their portfolios to the College examinations.

The SPMS (Staff Performance Management System) is the format for performance management of staff in the public sector. Similar to most performance management systems, it is intended to provide the employee with a clear job description (in the form of Key Performance Areas and tasks expected of a registrar). It includes a job description, performance plan, and development plan. The SPMS plan is set up at the start of the rotation, reviewed through the rotation and used as the basis for assessing registrar performance at the end of the rotation. SPMS bonuses do not apply to registrars. The SPMS is signed off biannually by the registrar and their academic and service mentors, and by the Head of the academic Department. For registrars in non-provincial posts, analogous performance managements systems exist and the process of performance evaluation will be adapted to ensure consonance between the different systems.

Meetings between the registrar and his/her academic and service mentors must take place on a regular basis to ensure the integrity of the management system and to ensure registrars are able to receive appropriate rotations and support. A copy of the registrar's SPMS documentation should be retained by the registrar and a copy (both hard copy and electronic) provided to the Head of the academic Division.

Learning as part of providing service

The core of benefiting from your training period lies with effective supervision of registrars taking place jointly by the service supervisor and the academic mentor. Each attachment will be governed by a written set of learning objectives (which forms part of your portfolio) and a personalised job description, which must be drawn up at the start of the rotation, jointly involving the academic mentor and the service supervisor. The Learning Objectives must be such that they match the objectives of the employing agency or organisation and provide appropriate Public Health training opportunities for the registrar. These learning objectives will inform the KPAs incorporated into the registrar's SPMS plan. They must also match the CMSA skills and competencies requirements which can be found in a separate document. The mentor and supervisor should discuss the appropriateness of all work envisaged, particularly applied research projects, in advance to ensure that registrars do not waste their time and that of the service organization. As part of the job description, arrangements for vacation leave and coursework attendance should be discussed with both service supervisor and academic mentor.

The academic mentor and service supervisor are expected to meet periodically to monitor progress as part of a formative assessment in terms of the initial plan. This process of discussion should continue during the course of the attachment and applies particularly to ad hoc work that is not envisaged when the job description is initially drawn up. Regular meetings are important to provide support and feedback to registrars.

Overtime Expectations

At present, staff delivering Public Health Medicine services in the Public Sector has not been allowed to participate in the system of commuted overtime. Although this is under ongoing negotiation, at present Public Health Medicine registrars are not eligible for commuted overtime. Note also, that no registrars are permitted to participate in the system Remunerated Work outside the Public Sector (RWOPS). Registrars are eligible to claim 'normal' overtime, as per public sector regulation, which caps the rate at which overtime is paid to a pay class far lower than a professional rate. If registrars are working overtime and wishing to claim, such overtime, they need to keep careful documentation to support such

claims. Further information should be obtained from the responsible Medical Superintendent in this regard.

Note that the Public Health Medicine registrar program discourages registrars from taking on clinical work after hours for overtime.

Publications and Reports

All projects and health service related work should result in Divisional reports that must be submitted to the MMed programme convener. Registrars are encouraged to publish research findings in academic journals as part of their professional development. Close contact with the academic mentor or other relevant departmental staff is essential to ensure quality outputs. The Supervisor should ensure that the work of registrars is appropriately acknowledged.

Leave

Registrars should aim to take their leave (in December and January) by agreement with the Head of the authority to which they have been allocated and in consultation for final approval with the Head of Division at SU. Leave forms for provincial staff are to be submitted to the Head of Division at SU for onward transmission to the service attachment office. Note that within the Public Service, leave is not allowed to accumulate, as this has previously resulted in serious disruption of service delivery.

Registrars need to familiarize themselves with the Special Leave requirements at the WCG Health HR offices.

For non-provincial registrars, procedures of leave should be jointly confirmed between the employing authority and SU.

Addresses and Telephone Numbers and Communication

Registrars must keep the Divisional MMed administrator, Ms Rolene Langford (rlm@sun.ac.za) and Prof Lilian Dudley (ldudley@sun.ac.za) informed at all times of changes in addresses, telephone numbers, especially cellphone numbers and their email addresses, so that they may be located when required. When rotating through different placements, registrars are to notify the Divisional MMed administrator of their telephone number, including cell phone numbers, and the extensions where they can be contacted.

It is particularly important that registrars are at all times contactable via cellphone and email. SU provides each registrar with an email address based on their student number. You

are also most likely to have private email address. **This has the potential to cause confusion.** The onus is on all registrars to access their SU email address on a daily basis.

Logistics: Registrar Office and Computers, parking

There are workstations for use by registrars in Room 4060B, Education Building, Tygerberg Campus (within the Division of Community Health) with network access and telephones available for use by registrars only. The security of the room is the responsibility of each registrar who will receive a key to the office. Any matters relating to maintenance or a need to upgrade the office furniture or equipment should be brought to the attention of the MMed program committee of the Division.

Parking on the Tygerberg campus is on the basis of purchasing and displaying a relevant staff parking disc.