

Under pressure...but still delivering

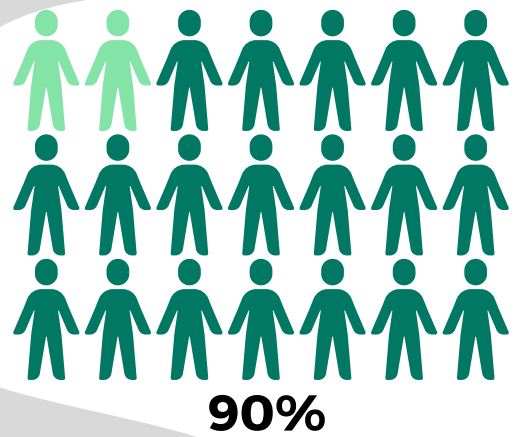
The Public Health Workforce faces unparalleled challenges in delivering services. They are under pressure and demand is pushing them to breaking point.

We asked our members*, who range from addiction support officers and food safety trainers to community health champions and school nurses, about the issues they face on a daily basis. The public health system was under pressure before the pandemic. They said that COVID-19 has made already heavy workloads even heavier. They told us about the problems, but also suggested solutions that would support them.

Public health challenges are greater

90%

said public health challenges are greater now than they were two years ago.



"[I'm] Exhausted, overworked and overwhelmed."

Demand for services has increased

85%

said demand for public health services has increased in the last two years.

85%

"I work in primary care and the demand is becoming unbearable."

Services are understaffed

72%

said services do not have the workforce to respond to demand.

72%

"I don't think the workforce has ever been in this poor state in my nearly 16-year career."

Despite the pressures...

They still see they make a difference

48%

said they still want to work in public health, with 15% strongly considering changing careers.

48%

[The] pandemic is what we have all been preparing for. It's been a challenge for so many reasons but I wouldn't want to be anywhere else than public health. We make a difference.

What will support the Public Health Workforce

1) Adequate funding

Public health services need to be properly funded and the workforce adequately paid for the services they deliver.

2) Public health is everyone's responsibility

Public health affects everyone, and government, business and services should work together to support the workforce to improve public health

3) Public health skills

Basic public health skills should be embedded across all public-facing organisations, so they are better equipped to improve the public's health.

4) Equality, diversity and inclusion

A diverse workforce is essential - we need to support a range of routes into public health and ensure leadership roles reflect the diversity of communities.

5) Public health as a career

Public health careers are fulfilling and have real impact on communities - RSPH will champion our members brilliant work.

6) Listen to the Public Health Workforce

The workforce must be heard so they can be better supported to deliver the best services and improve their job satisfaction.

Are you part of the Public Health Workforce?

We would like to hear about your experiences - you can do this by emailing policy@rsph.org.uk. If you are interested in becoming a RSPH member, you can find out more on our website or by emailing membership@rsph.org.uk

*Information in this briefing is drawn from an RSPH survey of its members, who are all part of the wider Public Health Workforce and represent a range of professions. The survey was conducted in January 2022 with 413 responses from across the 4 nations.