

**NHS PUBLIC HEALTH SCOTLAND
JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. JOB DETAILS

Job title:	Team Leader for the Field Epidemiology Service/ Consultant Epidemiologist
Immediate senior officer/line manager:	Consultant in Health Protection
Division:	Emergency Response and the Environment
Directorate:	Clinical and Protecting Health
Location	Edinburgh or Glasgow with travel throughout Scotland/UK
CAJE reference	NPPHSS046

2. JOB PURPOSE

The post holder will be responsible for leading the Field Epidemiology Team in providing a national service primarily to support Health Boards and the national response to new infectious disease outbreaks, for example, SARS-CoV-2 variants or mutations but also a range of other pathogens and public health incidents including environmental or chemical incidents. The post holder will lead the team in integrating epidemiological, microbiological, infectious disease and data science capacity and skills to deliver incident and outbreak investigations of the highest quality.

As a member of the directorates senior team, the post holder will play a key role in developing and implementing the strategic direction and policy associated with the Field Epidemiological Team.

3. DIMENSIONS

The post holder will provide managerial leadership and scientific oversight of the field epidemiology team (around 5-7 people) within the Clinical and Protecting Health Directorate. The Field Epidemiology team as a unit is a new development within PHS, primarily to support the investigation of a new SARS-CoV-2 variant or mutation but the team will also be available, working with topic-area expert teams in PHS and Health Boards, to quickly identify, respond and support other infectious disease or environmental threats across Scotland.

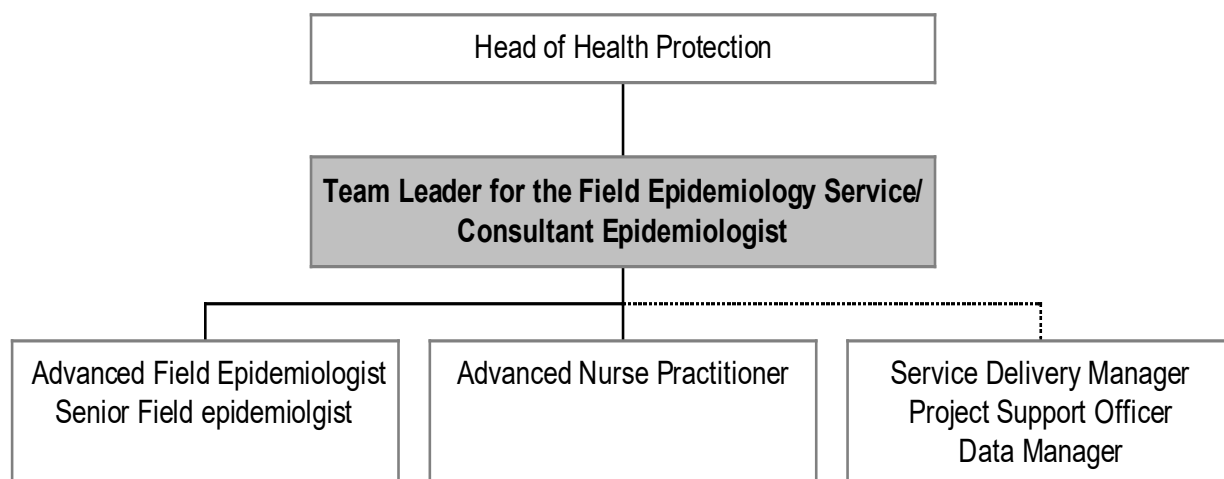
The post holder will lead on the epidemiologic analyses of the data, coordinating advice and guidance on specialist aspects of the analyses from topic area teams where relevant. The post holder will have overall responsibility for interpreting and preparing timely internal communications about the status of the investigations as well as scientific reports and published articles of the results.

The post holder will be required to manage projects, budgets in the region of £50-75k and staff (5-7 people). They will be expected to contribute to PHS's workforce training activities at a local, national and international level.

Stakeholders will include organisations such as: Scottish Government (SG), Health Boards and other NHS Organisations, Local Authorities; professional bodies such as Royal Colleges, the Scottish Parliament, third sector organisations, other partner organisations, the media, the public, commercial organisations and research bodies.

The post holder will be expected to contribute fully to the work of the Clinical and Protecting Health Directorate. They will be expected to establish and maintain positive relationships and collaborations internally and with key external stakeholders, and positively affect the behaviour and attitudes of team members and colleagues.

4. ORGANISATION CHART



5. ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT

Public Health Scotland is responsible for leading and enabling the drive to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities across Scotland.

We deliver:

- strong public health leadership across the whole public health system in Scotland
- high quality, effective and supportive health improvement, health protection and healthcare public health functions.

We are:

- intelligence, data and evidence led;
- have a key role in enabling and supporting delivery at local level.

We deliver leadership roles in relation to:

- public health research;
- innovation to improve population health and wellbeing;
- supporting the broad public health workforce across Scotland.
- PHS is a values driven organisation and we expect all our staff to role model our values in everything they do.

The post holder will sit in Clinical and Protecting Health which is one of four Directorates in PHS.

The role of the **Clinical and Protecting Health (CPH)** Directorate is to protect the people of Scotland from infectious and environmental hazards; enable high-quality clinical and public health knowledge, research and innovation; and change clinical and public health practice by using research, evidence and audits at a national and local level.

6. KEY RESULT AREAS

Outbreak Support and Epidemiological Investigations

1. Lead and manage the technical and analytical aspects of epidemiological outbreak investigations including advising on study design, writing protocols for analytical studies, overseeing questionnaire design and study database development, training interviewers, preparing outbreak reports and supporting investigations into exceedances and assigning and managing team resources during outbreaks or incidents.
2. Develop and use information and intelligence systems to underpin public health action and lead the collation and interpretation of relevant data to provide the most appropriate analyses. They will undertake specialist and complex analyses of quantitative and/or qualitative datasets which will require selection of the best option from a range of possible solutions.
3. Analyse and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and research evidence from a range of sources to make recommendations and inform decision making which may have long term impacts.
4. The post holder will oversee the development of protocols, standard operating procedures and approaches based on epidemiologic methods to assist in the systematic investigation of outbreaks and incidents. This could include conducting case control studies or designing new surveillance approaches.
5. The post holder will be expected to advise and make recommendations regarding the development of strategy and operational response during the incident or outbreak. This will require demonstrated ability to cope with multiple and changing demands and to meet tight deadlines. High levels of intellectual rigor, negotiation skills, self-motivation and flexibility are required to deal with complex public health issues, to advise and make recommendations regarding the development of strategy and operational response.

Expert advice and Evaluation

6. Provide expert epidemiological advice, interpretation and leadership to support and inform on highly complex epidemiological and statistical information using evidence-based approach within ethical frameworks, across sectors including local authorities, Health Boards, voluntary organisations, etc, in potentially contentious and hostile environments where barriers to acceptance may exist.
7. Influence external agencies by working with complex professional, managerial and population groups and other organisations in the statutory, non-statutory and private sectors.
8. Communicate effectively and diplomatically with a wide audience including the media and the public to change practice in sometimes highly challenging circumstances, for example sexually transmitted infectious disease outbreaks. Exceptional tact and diplomacy are critical as well as an ability to effectively work across organisational boundaries, sometimes without authority. The ability to understand and influence other work cultures will be key.
9. Act in an expert advisory capacity on public health knowledge, standards and practice, to national advisory committees and similar expert panels.
10. Write and/or contribute to national and local policy setting reports as required.

Leadership and Management

11. Recruit, lead, manage, motivate and develop a team of 5-7 people to ensure they are able to meet new challenges and have the required skills, knowledge and behaviours to respond to these including contributing to the formulation of department budgets and financial initiatives. Responsible for developing staff to have a strong understanding of the operating context of their stakeholders.
12. Providing national expertise to the development and implementation of multi-agency incident and response plans as required reflecting the diversity of local needs and inequalities. By identifying,

assessing, and recommending options for managing highly complex investigations and clearly communicate this information to organisations and the local community.

Research and Development

13. Develop links with academic centres and other public health agencies such as the UK Health Security Agency to ensure the work of Public Health Scotland is based on a sound research and evidence base. Put this into practice by leading on field epidemiology research, undertake research or audit and commission research audits/projects and pursue (and manage) external funding for research and development. Ensuring international communications, collaborations and research initiatives for areas of responsibility, as appropriate. Manage budgets for projects and for Research & Development grants, as appropriate,

Teaching and Training

14. Develop public health capacity by contributing to teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level and by training those already working in public health at the national, board and local levels.

7 & 8. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK & DECISIONS & JUDGEMENT

This is a national expert role with a high degree of autonomy, working within PHS strategic and operational framework. The post holder will have responsibility for delivering the Field Epidemiology Team response across Scotland as defined in the business plans.

They will have significant discretion (following broad health and governance frameworks) to utilise their specialist knowledge and experience to plan and deliver programmes and disseminate expert knowledge and advice to stakeholders.

The post holder will be managerially accountable to the Consultant in Health Protection

Formal objectives will be set and a review of work will be undertaken jointly between the post holder and the line manager twice per annum and should be aligned to PHS business and strategic objectives

The post holder will have broad freedom to act. Discussing risks and issues with the relevant medical consultant/public health specialist for Health Protection and, in liaison with management colleagues only when necessary. The postholder will ensure that the Risk Management process is followed.

9. MOST CHALLENGING PARTS OF THE JOB

Maintaining consistently high standards in the provision of timely, comprehensive and high quality scientific services relating to the analysis, management and communication of risk for the Field Epidemiology Team.

Dealing with highly complex or emotive issues that may attract high public, media and political interest, while also being adaptable and flexible in responding to competing demands and priorities in a rapidly changing professional and organisational environment.

Demonstrating leadership when faced with significant professional and organisational challenges

10. COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

The post holder will play a major part in continuing the close working relationships between PHS and its stakeholders, e.g. Scottish Government, NHS Boards, Local Authorities, SEPA, Scottish Water, UK Health Security Agency, Food Standards Scotland, Animal Health and reference laboratories

The post holder will be expected to communicate effectively with staff at all levels within stakeholder organisations on often contentious issues, and will require to adapt the complexity of information presented as necessary.

Furthermore the post holder will be required to communicate effectively with members of the public on potentially emotive issues (which may attract a high level of media or political interest) and provide complex information on a wide range of public health issues clearly at a level appropriate to the audience. Often these need to be done within short timescales.

The post holder will represent PHS in a number of fora/networks to exchange specialised clinical/epidemiological/scientific information in relation to surveillance, infection/exposure prevention and control etc., mainly through written and oral communications but also during attendance at meetings, seminars and conferences at local, national and international level. This can involve engagement with and briefings of senior Government and NHS officials and, occasionally, Scottish Ministers.

The post holder will be expected to lead multi-disciplinary and multi-agency groups for PHS charged with co-ordinating the delivery and assessment of a major health protection intervention or the management of a Scotland-wide public health incident. They will be required to effectively chair groups, lead on the achievement of collective decisions, ensure clear and accountable reporting and effectively liaise with internal multidisciplinary colleagues. They may also be required to carry out duties in other teams or other areas of the organisation if required

11. QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR EXPERIENCE SPECIFIED FOR THE POST

Highly skilled graduate in a science subject or related field is essential.

A postgraduate qualification (MSc or equivalent) is essential in a related discipline as is a PhD in epidemiology/public health or equivalent experience.

The post holder should have significant, demonstrable experience in research training methods, infectious disease epidemiology, surveillance, prevention and/or public health.

Completion of a formal field epidemiology training programme e.g. European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (EPIET), UK Field Epidemiology training Programme (UKFETP) is required or equivalent experience.

Inclusion in the Health care professionals council and or UK Voluntary Register (UKVR) for Public Health Specialists is desirable.

Highly developed analytical skills, including experience in the utilisation of statistical analysis tools such as R and associated packages is essential.

Proven experience of project management and/or acting in an advisory capacity in a healthcare, statistical or research environment is essential.

Substantial experience in a management role with proven skills in the management and development of multi-disciplinary, high-calibre staff in the delivery of a customer focussed service and managing change are essential. The staff and team management skills that are required include planning, organising, delegating, appraisal and staff development.

Post-holders are expected to keep abreast of, and contribute to changes to, relevant policies and guidelines which impact on their staff (e.g. PIN guidelines, HR policies) or the way their business is delivered (e.g. Freedom of Information Act).

The post-holder should have excellent interpersonal, communication, influencing, negotiating and presentation skills.

12. EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

Standard office conditions and equipment.

Standard keyboard skills.

13. SYSTEMS

Initiate, lead and manage the design and development of new data sets and databases, championing the use of latest technology and statistical methodologies, often in uncharted territory, e.g. the need for use of web based-technology to meet the eHealth Strategy; new health protection guidance and advice in response to emerging health threats.

Responsible for working with stakeholders (e.g. Local NHS Board health protection leads, clinicians) and/or sponsors to define and develop clear, detailed specifications of requirements, using specialist knowledge and expertise for new developments in order to provide immediate response to health protection issues.

To promote the integration of approaches to timely data capture and analysis, championing consistency and interoperability in data collection systems to respond to health protection incidents. Including how the data used for operational needs can also be reused for indirect uses; thus avoiding duplication of effort while promoting the use of established quality controlled national systems

Ensure staff work, store and transmit data in accordance with data protection, freedom of information and confidentiality principles.

The post holder will also lead on designing and implementing health information processes and tools to manage the collation and validation of data during an investigation. This includes assuring the quality of the data.

Implement Public Health Scotland's health and safety policies and arrangements and ensure that risk assessments, safe systems of work, control measures and staff training are up to date and effective. Managers will ensure accidents and incidents are reported and investigated and assist in auditing health and safety management arrangements.

14 PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB

Physical Effort:

Frequent requirement for sitting at a key board e.g. 2-3 hours at a time with (appropriate breaks). Requirement to carry heavy equipment to internal and external meetings (e.g. laptop). Frequent travel required which may include driving between 2 and 3 hours; also travel by train and by air.

Mental Effort:

Strong element of unpredictability in working day. The ability to make sound judgements, deal with unpredictable interruptions and meet deadlines, using own initiative. Requirement for post-holder to change from one task to another, prioritising effectively and adjusting plans.

Substantial mental effort required in terms of problem solving, juggling demands, and negotiating and influencing customers in respect of competing priorities within the Field Epidemiology Team to ensure sound judgements are made.

Sustained concentration, 2-3 hours at a time required to create and review complex analyses and reports. Frequently required to work to tight deadlines.

Ability to sustain mental effort and attention required to chair meetings, ensuring discussions remain focussed and balance of views extracted.

Regular requirement to develop, deliver and debate with senior colleagues in partner organisations at all levels.

Emotional effort:

Exposure to distressing or emotional circumstances in relation to incident management and staff discipline and grievance matters.

Required to handle and resolve conflict and challenging behaviour during meetings or discussions, especially where these are related to management of incidents.

Environment

There may be a requirement to participate in a rota to work out of hours including weekends in the situation where there is an ongoing incident involving the team or resilience is needed.

Travel throughout Scotland (and possibly UK) is a requirement of this post

15. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT

Job Holder's Signature:

Date:

Head of Department Signature:

Date:

HR Representative's Signature:

Date: