



UNSW
SYDNEY

Professional Doctor in Public Health – Future Health Leaders Program

School of Population Health
Faculty of Medicine and Health



The School of Population Health (SPH) offers a unique Professional Doctorate in Applied Public Health (DrPH) which is designed to be delivered in partnership with suitable health workplaces.

The DrPH is a qualification aimed at strengthening practitioner based knowledge and practice for senior clinicians and health managers. The program enables graduates to generate and use evidence within the context of real-world challenges and priorities. As a qualification, it is in line with international trends that demonstrate the advantages of a professional doctorate as an alternative to a PhD for practitioners and leaders in public health and health management.

Graduates of the professional doctorate are recognised as advanced health professionals and practitioner-researchers who can take on senior and leadership roles within public health and health service settings.

The program provides an advanced degree through intensive theoretical

training workshops and workplace-based projects involving support from UNSW academic and workplace supervisors.

Candidates fulfil the requirements for the DrPH while working, through workplace experience, optional formal coursework and education seminars, workshops, and a thesis which reflects original research undertaken through professional practice. Candidates are supervised by SPH academic supervisors and workplace supervisors for the duration of their candidature.

The model offered at UNSW is an elite program and applications are judged on a case-by-case basis against rigorous criteria that ensure that the candidate is best positioned to successfully complete their intended research program and complete other necessary activities. Applications by candidates must be accompanied by a letter of support from their workplace. Candidates must also have recently completed a Master of Public Health or equivalent Master's level qualification, and/or have at least 3 years of clinical

leadership experience in their respective fields.

The DrPH is a work-based program, and our objective is to partner with health and health related workplaces to produce highly competent multidisciplinary professionals in public health and health management for health workplaces in Australia and overseas.

Candidates

Emerging health leaders in clinical practice, health administration, hospital management, public health and other health and health related organisations.

Partner employers

Health workplaces may include ministries of health, hospitals, health systems, area health services, private health organisations, non-government organisations, national centres in health and other relevant health and health related organisations.



Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the DrPH program, the applicant must have been awarded a Master of Public Health or a qualification considered equivalent from a university or tertiary institution at a level acceptable to the DrPH Postgraduate Coordinators and UNSW Graduate Research School, and have at least three years full-time health related work experience.

Only candidates who have been accepted by the School of Population Health (SPH) into the Future Health Leaders Program may enrol in a DrPH. To be eligible for this program the candidate's employer must agree to support throughout the applicant's candidature by employing the potential candidate for at least the four year (or equivalent part-time) enrolment period, or by supporting them via other funding mechanisms such as a scholarship for the four years full-time equivalent. Employers must also agree to release the potential candidate from the workplace for workshops, educational short courses and seminars.

Applicants are also advised that any unforeseen changes in employment situation may have an impact on their ability to continue with the DrPH program. It is a requirement of the Graduate Research School that DrPH candidates in the program who change their employer must enter into a new workplace agreement with their gaining employer.

Conditions for entry into the program

Once a potential DrPH candidate has been provided with a letter of support to enter the Future Health Leaders Program by the SPH, the applicant must lodge an application to enrol as a candidate for the DrPH degree with the Graduate Research School by the relevant advertised date for commencement into the term/scholarship that suits their circumstances. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that sufficient time is allocated prior to GRS deadlines to ensure that the School of Population Health DrPH Postgraduate Coordinators can conduct the required pre-admission interviews with you. Deadlines for submission of an application to the School of Population Health are provided in the introduction to the DrPH EOI form.

Candidates will undertake their research in their workplace. Before providing a letter of support to an application the SPH shall be satisfied that agreement has been reached between the SPH and the applicant and their employer on the provision of adequate facilities and that these are in accordance with the provisions of the guidelines for promoting postgraduate study within the University.

The candidate shall be enrolled as a full-time student unless part-time enrolment has been approved by the Postgraduate Coordinators and Graduate Research School. Candidates will be enrolled externally

"The Professional Doctorate of Public Health Program at UNSW provides me with an opportunity to undertake applied research in the workplace that directly relates to my role. I represent the non-government alcohol and other drugs treatment sector in NSW, and the idea for my study has come about from the direct need of the sector. It also responds to a priority under the National Drug Strategy and is supported by funders of treatment here in NSW and nationally.

The research program has provided me with the opportunity to develop a network with other students undertaking the program from a wide variety of health backgrounds utilising a range of different methods for their study. It has provided me with the resources to develop my own research skills and undertake the study through a more robust methodology than if had I done the work independently.

The degree will assist me by developing my research skills, developing a good network with public health professionals and academics, increasing my credibility both in my workplace and for future employees, contributing to the public health literature and improving health services for people with alcohol and other drugs issues."

Professional Doctorate of Public Health candidate



unless internal enrolment has been approved by the Postgraduate Coordinators and Graduate Research School.

The research shall be supervised by a supervisor and at least one co-supervisor who are members of the academic staff of the School (including conjoint academics) in accordance with the Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy and the SPH Guidelines for DrPH Supervisors. In addition, the candidate must nominate a workplace supervisor at the candidate's place of employment who is then required to formally agree to oversee the workplace dimensions to the DrPH program.

The applicant is responsible for securing a suitable supervisory team. This will require candidates to individually approach academics at the school and discuss their proposed research. The DrPH Postgraduate Coordinators are able to provide broad advice to candidates, however the task of establishing a relationship with a supervisor and progressing that relationship to DrPH application is the primary responsibility of the candidate to secure. Further information is available from the DrPH Postgraduate Coordinators.

Faculty

The coursework component of the program will be delivered by academics in the UNSW School of Population Health, who have formal

qualifications in workplace-based learning and extensive experience in delivering such education programs. Our team is passionate about workplace-based learning and increasing the relevance of academia to workforce development. UNSW has one of the largest public health education programs, and the largest and oldest health management education program in Australia. Our strength in public health and health management will ensure up-to-date and relevant teaching approaches.

The research component of the program will be supported by supervisors who are based at the School of Population Health and may include experts and academics from other disciplines or outside of UNSW and/or within the broader health care system. An important part of the entry requirement into the program is the candidate's responsibility to secure a suitable supervisory team who have the necessary expertise, relationship and ability to support the candidate in their research.

Finally, all candidates are expected to undertake a series of compulsory coursework components in addition to other coursework. Candidates are required to attend three one-week workshops during their candidacy. The workshop curriculum will include a range of theory and skills-based training drawing from the disciplines of public health, health management and health research, such as epidemiology, evidence-based policy, interpreting research in practice, applied research skills, ethics, health economics, health systems, and the

media. Peer led learning will also be included.

Additional learning opportunities will also be available to candidates based on their individual research program needs, drawing from our wide range of public health and health management courses available in external delivery mode.

Commitment from candidates

A three to four year (or part-time equivalent) workplace-based professional doctorate program conducted primarily in the workplace, complemented by a coursework component including short campus-based intensive learning sessions and research methodological training.

Candidates will produce a thesis of between 35,000-65,000 words reporting their research findings and outlining the implications and impact of their work. During workshop activities candidates will interact with their cohort as a group to learn and develop from each other as much as from the University and the workplace. They will have an academic and a workplace supervisor who will work together to guide the completion of the DrPH thesis.

Commitment from the employer

Commitment from the workplace partner is essential to investing in high-level development and



professional extension of their top talent through this program. This includes providing a salary, or equivalent financial support, to candidates while they continue working for the partnering organisation. Most candidates therefore complete their DrPH in a part-time work pattern, and the most effective pattern of research is where the candidates research occurs during and is an integral part of normal work duties. Workplaces are also expected to release candidates for block teaching on campus once yearly, and to facilitate the candidate to undertake their research in the workplace. This may include supporting the candidate to secure relevant ethics approvals, executive or board approvals to undertake research activities, and provide access to personnel and resources to assist the candidate to undertake the work. A good example of this is assisting the candidate to collect or access relevant data for the purpose of their research.

The workplace must also nominate a workplace supervisor who works with the academic supervisor and provides input into the supervisory process. The workplace supervisor is considered integral to the UNSW Future Leaders Program, and is also expected to attend periodic candidature review processes and other meetings as needed with UNSW academics.

The investment of effort, resources and time by the workplace provides significant return. This can range from the reputational gains through the

visible work of the candidate which is often highly suitable for media attention and promotion, directly benefiting the organisation through innovation and the development of new ideas depending on the research being undertaken, and growing talent within the organisation and supporting the organisation to conduct more effective and impactful research supported by the expertise generated in their employee through the program.

Commitment from UNSW

UNSW will provide a primary academic supervisor for the candidate, subject to the establishment of a supervisory relationship with the candidate, who will work with the workplace supervisor to develop an appropriate and relevant research realisation plan.

UNSW will also provide a suite of high-quality academic learning in the form of a structured DrPH coursework and block teaching program once a year over the three years, and providing access to the broader SPH core and elective course offerings to enable the candidate to meet their DrPH coursework requirements. Depending on candidate needs and prior learning profile, this can cover subjects such as epidemiology and statistics, interpreting research evidence for policy, quality and safety in health care, principles of health management, health economics, leadership in health, program evaluation, Indigenous health, media skills, and a range of other modules. The community of practice model

will be employed throughout the program with UNSW facilitating interaction, diversification of perspectives, and peer-learning from a cohort of candidates; all who are future health leaders from a wide range of health organisations both from within in Australia and overseas.

Candidates will come out of the program with life-long links with their cohort, part of a research community of practice, and having learnt not only about how to improve their own organisation, but about how to improve and innovate in the broader public health and health systems both locally and globally.

Further Information

Applicants can apply at any time of the year via submission of an EOI form with appropriate supporting documentation.

Recommended submission dates for applications are outlined in the EOI. It is strongly recommended that prospective candidates carefully familiarise themselves with the necessary deadlines that are required for a particular commencement term. The EOI form can be found at: sph.med.unsw.edu.au/future-students/postgraduate-research/professional-doctorate

Employers and candidates interested in the program, please contact:

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