

# School of Public Health and Community Medicine

## Master of Public Health in Social Research



Many of the drivers of illness and wellbeing are social, historical and political, and are minimally altered by biomedical interventions. This means public health actors are continually striving to build productive connections with others beyond the health system – in urban design, community cohesion, and the penal system, to name but a few. To address the social drivers of health and illness we need to use the resources of the full range of social sciences.

This specialisation provides students with training in sociological research on public health and in approaches to health issues using both quantitative / epidemiological and qualitative / interpretive methods. It consists of core MPH courses, with a stream-defining course on sociological approaches to public health, a choice of quantitative and/or qualitative methodology courses, and a selection of recommended MPH electives with social emphasis, ranging from courses on specific groups or topics (Indigenous people, HIV, drugs and alcohol, mental health) to broader policy and philosophical issues

### Find out more about Social Research:

Associate Professor Niamh Stephenson  
T: +61 (2) 9385 1281  
E: n.stephenson@unsw.edu.au  
School of Public Health and  
Community Medicine  
UNSW Sydney, NSW 2052, Australia  
CRICOS Provider No 00098G

(inequality, ethics, policy). The stream is taught by staff with a broad range of disciplinary backgrounds including sociology, psychology, political science, anthropology, ethnography, epidemiology, statistics, education, linguistics and philosophy. The name of the specialisation is reflected on the testamur and students graduate with a Master of Public Health in Social Research.

### Who should do this stream?

This Master of Public Health (MPH) degree focuses on the social aspects of health and social approaches to addressing public health challenges. You may be a social science graduate seeking training in public health research skills, or a public health or healthcare practitioner wanting to develop your understanding of social influences on health and illness and how to address them. If you are interested in carrying out research, the degree provides a clear pathway towards further academic research training (eg a PhD) or research in the workplace (government policy, program evaluation etc). Graduates from this stream develop the knowledge and skills to enter postgraduate research degrees that require expertise in either social sciences or qualitative research, or both.

*Solutions to health problems often lie outside the health system.*

### STREAM STRUCTURE

Students must complete the eight courses listed below to complete their degree:

#### Three MPH core courses:

- PHCM9012 Health Promotion & Social Perspectives of Health
- PHCM9041 Foundations in Public Health & Health Care Systems
- PHCM9498 Epidemiology & Statistics

#### One stream-defining course:

- PHCM9522 Politics, Surveillance, Health

#### Two Social Research methodological courses:

- PHCM9120 Qualitative Research Methods
- PHCM9132 Applied Research Methods

#### Two courses from recommended Social Research electives:

- PHCM9010 Community Development
- PHCM9331 Ethics & Law in Public Health
- PHCM9381 Policy Studies
- PHCM9517 Advanced Biostatistics & Statistical Computing\*
- PHCM9604 Tobacco, Alcohol & Illicit Drugs
- PHCM9622 The Global HIV Epidemic
- PHCM9626 Inequalities and Health
- PHCM9630 Indigenous Health
- PHCM9761 Public Mental Health

Students with appropriate qualifications may choose only one methodological course with permission of the stream convenor and may elect to conduct a supervised research project on a social research-related topic or Internship by enrolling in one of the following courses:

- PHCM9143 Internship in Social Research
- PHCM9148 Project in Social Research

\*Prerequisite: PHCM9498