

Unit 12: Public Health

Unit code: M/600/8964

QCF Level 3: BTEC Nationals

Credit value: 10

Guided learning hours: 60

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to enable learners to gain knowledge of the origins of public health policy and the current strategies in place. They will also develop an understanding of how public health is monitored, the origin and development of systems for promoting and protecting public health, and the range of key groups in influencing related policy.

● Unit introduction

Public health is concerned with protecting and improving the health of the population, rather than individual health. Practitioners working in the health and social care sectors need to be aware of the implications of public health policy on services and those who use services. They need to be able to consider the reasons for improving public health for both individuals and wider society.

Learners will gain an understanding of current patterns of ill health and consider factors affecting health in the UK. Learners will also have the opportunity to consider different methods of promoting and protecting public health.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know the origins of public health policy and current public health strategies
- 2 Understand factors that affect health status and patterns of ill health
- 3 Understand how public health is promoted and protected.

Unit content

1 Know the origins of public health policy and current public health strategies

Historical perspectives of public health systems: nineteenth century, eg work of John Snow, Edwin Chadwick, the sanitary movement, Poor Law Act (1834), first Public Health Act (1848); twentieth century, eg Beveridge Report (1942), founding of the National Health Service (1948), Acheson Report (1998), Our Healthier Nation (1999); twenty-first century, eg White Paper (Choosing Health: Making healthier choices easier (2004)), public health agencies, Health Protection Agency (HPA), National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

Public health strategies: key aspects of, eg identifying the health needs of the population, monitoring the health status of the community, developing programmes to reduce risk and screen for early disease, controlling communicable disease, promoting the health of the population, planning and evaluating the national provision of health and social care target setting, eg local, national, international

Sources of information for determining patterns of health/ill health: statistics, eg World Health Organization (WHO), government, regional, local; studies, eg epidemiological, regional reports, local reports, demographic data, Public Health Observatories, HPA

Key groups in setting and influencing public health policy: government and government agencies, eg Department of Health; pressure groups, eg Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth; international groups, eg WHO, United Nations; national groups, eg HPA, NICE, Cancer Research UK

2 Understand the factors that affect health status and patterns of ill health

Patterns of ill health: the persistence of patterns and inequalities in health; Black Report (1980), Acheson Report (1998), Our Healthier Nation (1999), Tackling Health Inequalities: a Programme for Action (2003), Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier (2004)

Factors affecting health: socio-economic, eg social class, age, gender, income, expenditure, employment status, housing, discrimination, education; environmental, eg urban, rural, water supply, waste management, housing, pollution, access to health and social care services; genetic, eg sickle cell anaemia, thalassaemia, cystic fibrosis, susceptibility to certain diseases, sexuality; lifestyle, eg culture, diet, peer pressure, media, access to leisure/recreational facilities, use of recreational drugs, alcohol and smoking

3 Understand how public health is promoted and protected

Aims: to improve the health of the nation and reduce health inequalities

Health education: activities, eg healthy eating campaigns, government standards for school lunches, national no smoking day, health trainers

Protection: specific programmes, eg immunisation, disease surveillance, health and genetic screening programmes

Environmental protection: from hazards, eg waste disposal/treatment, supply of safe water, pollution control, control of food preparation, storage and sale, climate change

Disease prevention: communicable diseases, eg tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, meningitis, salmonella food poisoning, MRSA, poliomyelitis, measles; non-communicable diseases, eg skin cancer, lung cancer, bowel cancer; coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes

Socio-economic support and protection: welfare benefits, eg child tax credit, pensions, child benefit, free school meals, housing support, fare concessions

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 describe key aspects of public health strategies [IE1; IE3; CT1]	M1 compare historical and current features of public health	
P2 describe the origins of public health policy in the UK from the 19th century to the present day [IE1; IE3; IE5; CT1; SM2]		
P3 describe current patterns of ill health and how they are monitored [IE1; IE5; CT1]		
P4 explain the main factors affecting current patterns of health in the UK [IE1; IE3; IE5; CT1; CT4; SM2]	M2 discuss the factors likely to influence current and future patterns of health in the UK	D1 evaluate the influence of government on factors that contribute to the current patterns of health and illness in the UK
P5 explain health promotion and protection [IE1; CT1]	M3 assess the different methods that can be used for promoting and protecting public health.	
P6 explain appropriate methods of prevention/control for a named communicable and a named non-communicable disease. [IE1; IE3; IE5; CT1; SM2]		D2 evaluate the effectiveness of methods used to promote and protect public health for the two named diseases.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills which are embedded in the assessment of this unit. By achieving the criteria, learners will have demonstrated effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers CT – creative thinkers	RL – reflective learners TW – team workers	SM – self-managers EP – effective participators
------------	--	---	--

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Learners will need to understand the historical perspectives of the public health system and relevant legislation, for example how the 1848 Public Health Act came into being, before studying current patterns of ill health and factors that can affect the health of the population. It is important that learners understand that there are similarities as well as differences in historical and contemporary patterns of health and illness and the role of national and local government in relation to public health and the health responsibilities of individuals.

Learners should understand how patterns of health and illness are monitored, how health and wellbeing statistics are collected and how these statistics are used to inform the planning and delivery of health screening, promotion and prevention programmes. Using statistics from local health authorities, the World Health Organization, and the Government Office for National Statistics can help learners to identify patterns of health and illness. The reports highlighted in the unit content also suggest useful sources of information.

Learners should understand the terminology used in this specialist area, for example mortality, morbidity, and epidemiology. It is important that learners understand the difference between health promotion and illness prevention, including the links between lifestyle and ill health.

Learners should also be encouraged to look at topical health issues highlighted in the media to build up an awareness of how they are dealt with, for example obesity. This would allow exploration of the wider dimensions of health and illustrate the role and limits of government and government agencies in promoting health and preventing illness. Asking guest speakers to talk about their work would be useful for learners. Centres could ask practitioners such as environmental health officers and community public health nurses to discuss current practice and government guidelines related to public health issues.

Learners will benefit from carrying out research, using a range of sources including the internet, and bringing their information into class to share with other members of the group. This provides opportunities for them to research diseases currently topical or prevalent, for example influenza, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, lung cancer or coronary heart disease. Learners could identify the current patterns of health and illness in the UK by presenting their findings verbally, or in other formats, to their group.

Learners need to explain the different methods of prevention/control that could be used for a named communicable and a named non-communicable disease. An example of this would be the Child Health Screening programme.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Unit introduction.
Discussion: What is public health? Definitions of health; characteristics of public health; why public health matters to government.
Tutor input: the origins of public health; health reforms, scientific advances, timeline and key developments.
Assignment 1: What is public health? (P1, P2, M1)
Discussion: genetic factors influencing health, technological advances, genetic screening.
Guest speaker/learner research: environmental health – external and internal hazards, central and local government responsibilities, role of the EU and WHO.
Tutor input/discussion: socio-economic factors affecting health. Links between deprivation and health.
Learner research: inequalities in health, patterns of health and illness – regional, local and between different groups of people. Links between health and lifestyle.
Tutor input: how healthy are we? Sources of information; statistics and how to use them – turning data into information.
Library/learning resource visit: exercise in finding and interpreting statistical information.
Homework: compare health and wellbeing in your local area against the national average for a range of statistical indicators, eg infant mortality, immunisation take up, hospital admissions.
Class discussion and summary.
Assignment 2: Factors affecting the health of the public (P3, P4, M2, D1)
Tutor input: significant communicable diseases and prevention strategies – responsibilities of individuals and government strategies.
Learner research: screening and disease prevention – Child Health Surveillance (universal screening programme), adult screening programmes (well woman/well man clinics), screening for specific diseases etc.
Assignment 3: Health protection and promotion (P5, P6, M3, D2)
Learner research: health stories in the media.
Tutor input: emerging public health issues – international comparisons, role of travel, lifestyle, implications of climate change.
Debate: role of the media – friend or foe?
Unit review and assessment.

Assessment

Evidence to meet the unit requirements can be generated in a variety of ways, including articles, reports, presentations, group discussions, leaflets or audio/visual recordings. Centres need to be aware that if any evidence is presented as group work, each individual learner should also have their own evidence.

For P1 and P2, learners need to demonstrate their knowledge of the key aspects of public health in the UK and their origins, looking at the historical perspectives given in the *Unit content*. Learners need to ensure they consider UK public health strategies from the nineteenth century to the present day in the UK, and why it is in the interests of governments to protect the health of the public.

For M1, learners will need to show that they can identify and understand the similarities and differences in historical and current health issues, for example the persistence of health inequalities and the reasons for this, or how the government responds to actual or perceived threats to the health of everyone, rather than specific groups or individuals. P1, P2 and M1 could be assessed through an initial piece of writing in which learners describe key aspects of public health and the origins of public health in the UK, together with some comparative analysis. A timeline could also be included here.

For P3, learners need to describe current patterns of ill health and to do so they need to know how statistics are collected and used, including the criteria for measuring health. Evidence could include the use of appropriately interpreted graphical information.

For P4, learners need to understand the factors that affect health. They should include factors from the identified groups in the *Unit content* – socio-economic, environmental, genetic and lifestyle. There should also be the opportunity for learners to achieve M2 where they need to discuss which factors are likely to affect current and future patterns of health. It would be useful to assess both criteria through one assignment.

D1 requires learners to evaluate the influence of government on health inequalities. Learners are likely to demonstrate that although government action at national and local level has a role to play in preventing ill health, the outcomes of these interventions are not easily correlated with health improvements; they will be able to provide statistical evidence of where interventions appear to have been effective and where they have been less so. Learners will also demonstrate an understanding of how poverty is measured and the links between inequalities in income and status and inequalities in health. The most-able learners will demonstrate an understanding of the extent to which governments are prepared and able to address this.

P5 asks learners to show that they understand the difference between health protection (and associated legislation) and health promotion aimed at groups and individuals whose health is at risk from disease or lifestyle factors. For P6, an understanding of the methods that can be used for preventing and controlling disease is needed. Appropriate methods must be identified and related to two named diseases, one communicable and one non-communicable. A piece of writing explaining the methods, with examples, could be used as evidence.

Evidence for M3 will involve learners assessing the methods that can be used to promote and protect public health. For D2, learners are required to consider the strengths and weaknesses of methods used to promote and protect public health, evaluating how effective they are and how they achieve their aims, focusing on the named communicable and non-communicable disease of their choosing.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, M1	What is public health?	You are a trainee journalist and have been asked to prepare a piece for part one of a series on public health. It will cover the key factors that have led to improvements in the public's health since the early 19th century.	Written paper or audio recording (could be a recorded radio interview for example).
P3, P4, M2, D1	Factors affecting the health of the public	Your editor was so impressed that she has asked you to prepare part two, which is a study on the health and wellbeing of two regional populations within the UK. Suggest reasons for the differences with reference to the factors likely to affect current and future health and wellbeing and say what action the government can take to minimise the differences.	Written paper or audio recording (could be a recorded radio interview for example).
P5, P6, M3, D2	Health protection and promotion	You are the senior community public health nurse for a Primary Care Trust. You have been asked to give a presentation to a local secondary school on health protection and promotion. Using a named communicable disease and a named non-communicable disease as examples in your presentation, describe what methods could be used to prevent the diseases occurring.	Presentation and accompanying comprehensive notes. (The work does not have to be presented to an audience.)

Links to National Occupational Standards (NOS), other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Health and Social Care sector suite (see *Appendix A*) and has links with units from other qualifications in that suite. See *Appendix E* for NOS links and *Appendix G* for a mapping of the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework against particular units in this qualification.

Essential resources

The following resources are essential for delivery of this unit:

- an appropriately qualified tutor
- library resources with key texts, newspapers, journals and other reference materials
- internet access.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

The following resources would greatly enhance the vocational context of the unit:

- work-experience placements
- health promotion units
- local and national media reports
- guest speakers from various health backgrounds to provide learners with up-to-date and current aspects of public health policies and issues, for example environmental health officers, community public health practitioners, health promoters.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Acheson D – *Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health: Report* (HMSO, 1998) ISBN 9780113221738

Beaglehole et al – *Basic Epidemiology* (WHO, 2007) ISBN 9789241547079

Boys D, Langridge E and Michie V – *BTEC National Health and Social Care Book 2* (Nelson Thornes, 2007) ISBN 9780748781720

Davey et al – *Health and Disease: A Reader* (Open University, 2002) ISBN 9780335209675

Donaldson L J and Donaldson R J – *Essential Public Health* (Petroc Press, 2003) ISBN 9781900603874

Hall D. M. B and Elliman D (editor) – *Health for all Children, Fourth Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2003) ISBN 9780198515883

Moonie N (editor) – *Health & Social Care; Edexcel GCE AS Level Double Award* (Heinemann, 2005) ISBN 9780435453701

Myers B – *The Natural Sciences* (Nelson Thornes, 2004) ISBN 9780748785834

Stretch B – *Core Themes in Health and Social Care* (Heinemann, 2007) ISBN 9780435464257

Stretch B and Whitehouse M – *BTEC National Health and Social Care Book 2* (Heinemann, 2007) ISBN 9780435499167

Stretch B and Whitehouse M – *BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Health and Social Care Student Book 1* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 9781846907663

Stretch B and Whitehouse M – *BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Health and Social Care Student Book 2* (Pearson, 2010) ISBN 9781846907470

Thomson H, Meggitt C, Aslangul S and O'Brien V – *Further Studies for Health* (Hodder Arnold, 2002) ISBN 9780340804230

Other resources

The New NHS: Modern Dependable (Department of Health, 1997)

Saving Lives. Our Healthier Nation (Department of Health, 1997)

Choosing Health (Department of Health, 2004)

Journals and magazines

Community Care

Health Service Journal

Journal of Epidemiology

Nursing Times

Website

www.apho.org.uk

The Association of Public Health Observatories

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	[IE1] identifying questions to answer when researching public health [IE3] exploring the history of public health in the UK [IE5] considering the influence of circumstances and beliefs on the history of public health and methods of prevention, considering the factors that affect public health
Creative thinkers	[CT1] asking questions to extend their thinking about public health [CT4] question their own thinking and assumptions about the factors that affect public health in the UK
Self-managers	[SM2] working towards deadlines for assignments.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	selecting and interacting with various ICT systems in order to carry out research and produce assignments
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	searching for information using different sources, and using multiple search criteria when researching patterns of health in the UK
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	evaluating the suitability of information for assignment on the history of public health
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	entering and developing information for use in assignments on health patterns
Mathematics	
Select and apply a range of skills to find solutions	selecting and applying skills to analyse statistics which determine the patterns of ill health
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	taking part in discussions about the factors which will influence patterns of health in the future listening and interacting with guest speakers such as public health nurses
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	reading various texts, gathering information in order to form ideas and arguments about the future of public health
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	writing complex documents, for example on the origins of public health and methods of prevention, communicating information and opinions clearly.