

Senior Public Health Practitioner

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Western Isles Health Board
The best at what we do



Job Advert



Senior Public Health Practitioner
Band 6 £41,608 -£50,702 per annum
Plus £1,406 Distant Islands Allowance per annum
37 Hours per week
Permanent

An exciting opportunity has arisen with NHS Western Isles, to join the Public Health Team as a Senior Public Health Practitioner. This is a fantastic opportunity for a public health professional who would like to expand their remit and work flexibly across all areas of public health. You will join an established and experienced team, and participate in a range of professional activities and projects to improve and protect the health of the population in the Western Isles.

You will bring a positive outlook and will be responsible for leading on multiple public health projects and areas of work across health improvement, healthcare public health, and health protection. The health protection component will involve handling enquiries and situations both during working hours, and out of hours by supporting the on call rotation. The on call element is typically undertaken from home.

You will work with clinical and non-clinical colleagues, both internally and in partner organisations. You will line manage a public health practitioner, and will support them in their learning and development. Experience of one or more domains of public health and a relevant degree and postgraduate qualification are required, although full training on the systems and processes will be provided during induction.

The post is permanent and is based at the Western Isles Health Board Office in Stornoway, with occasional travel to other sites required.

Known as Scotland's Atlantic Islands, the Western Isles are steeped in history and culture, with stunning landscapes, spectacular coastlines, a strong sense of community and identity, and renowned Hebridean hospitality. For those with young families, the Western Isles also offer a safe place to live, a high-quality education system, with low levels of crime.

This role does not meet the eligibility criteria for a Health and Care Worker visa. NHS Western Isles (NHSWI) is unable to provide candidates or employees with a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS). Please note the organisation chart presented is indicative and may be subject to change.

This role is not eligible for relocation expenses.

Informal enquiries and discussions with potential applicants are encouraged. Please contact Colum Durkan at colum.durkan@nhs.scot to arrange a time.

The successful applicant will be required to register with the PVG Scheme (Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme). This post is not eligible for relocation expenses.

All NHS Western Isles vacancies appear on the NHS Scotland website: apply.jobs.scot.nhs.uk, along with a job description.

Tha beàrnan-obrach NHS Eilean Siar uile gu léir a' nochdadh air làrach-lìn NHS na h-Alba <https://apply.jobs.scot.nhs.uk>, còmhla ri dealbh-obrach.

If you have any further queries, please contact Tel: 01851 762027.

JOB DESCRIPTION

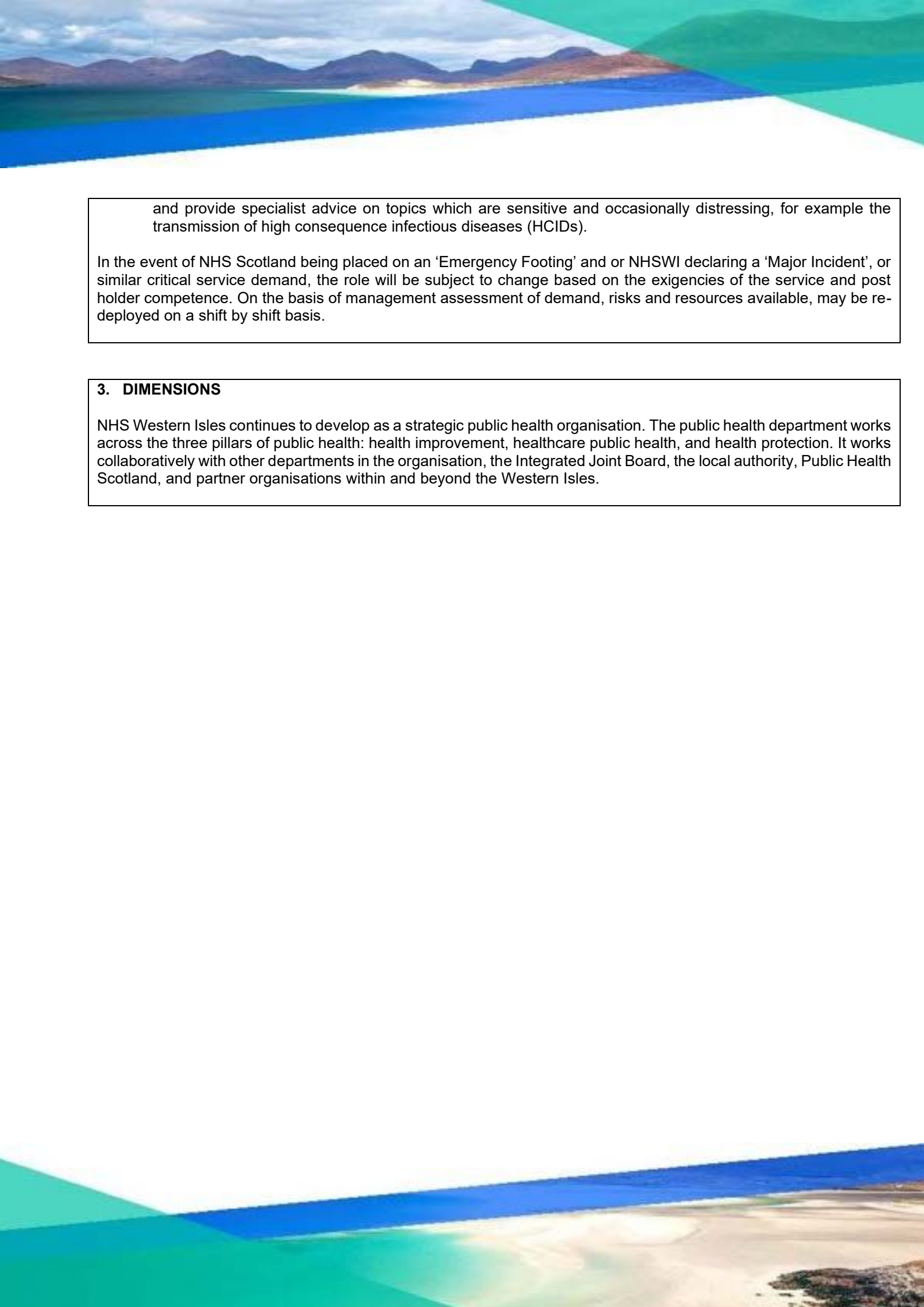
1.	SERVICE	Public Health
2.	SERVICE DIRECTORATE/DEPARTMENT	Public Health
3.	JOB TITLE	Senior Public Health Practitioner
4.	GRADE	B6
5.	LOCATION	NHS Western Isles, Health Board Office, Stornoway
6.	REPORTING TO	Consultant in Public Health
7.	Last Update	05.02.2026

2. JOB PURPOSE

- Develop, support and inform NHS Western Isles' public health function, and work with local partner organisations to ensure good delivery of public health practice.
- Work with local and national health intelligence colleagues to identify and agree local baseline and outcome indicators to monitor and evaluate the implementation of health programmes.
- Occasionally design and deliver training across the Western Isles on a broad range of public health topics covering the health improvement, healthcare public health and health protection domains as required.
- Developing the capacity of the community and staff working in the statutory, business and voluntary sectors to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population using participatory approaches, through the provision of practical advice and support.
- Lead agreed public health projects, including public health interventions, service evaluations, health impact assessments, and reports. This will involve inter-agency and inter-disciplinary working, and dealing with complex data sets.
- Provide public health input to healthcare service and clinical pathway design, to ensure the needs of the population are met and services are equitable and accessible.
- Provide public health input into managed clinical networks in the Western Isles, working with clinicians across a range of specialties and professional groups.

Represent NHS Western Isles on agreed regional and national committees and working groups, including the North of Scotland Public Health Network and a range of topic specific groups relevant to current projects.

- Participate in the Health Board on call rota and provide specialist health protection advice on a range of situations of varying complexity both during out outside of normal working hours as required. This will require working without direct supervision, and making judgements about evolving situations in which the information is incomplete or emerging. It will involve speaking to patients, carers, and professionals to gather information



and provide specialist advice on topics which are sensitive and occasionally distressing, for example the transmission of high consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs).

In the event of NHS Scotland being placed on an 'Emergency Footing' and or NHSWI declaring a 'Major Incident', or similar critical service demand, the role will be subject to change based on the exigencies of the service and post holder competence. On the basis of management assessment of demand, risks and resources available, may be re-deployed on a shift by shift basis.

3. DIMENSIONS

NHS Western Isles continues to develop as a strategic public health organisation. The public health department works across the three pillars of public health: health improvement, healthcare public health, and health protection. It works collaboratively with other departments in the organisation, the Integrated Joint Board, the local authority, Public Health Scotland, and partner organisations within and beyond the Western Isles.



4. REPORTING STRUCTURE

5. ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT

The role of the Public Health Team is to:

- Promote a coherent, collaborative leadership for Public Health specifically in the Western Isles but also across the North of Scotland and nationally, including the building of healthy public policy and addressing inequalities in health and healthcare provision.
- Consider population health needs and, emphasising collective responsibility for health, its protection and disease prevention, and use population methodologies in developing programmes of work which include action on health inequalities, and the underlying socio-economic and wider determinants of health and disease.
- Develop, support and provide specialist expertise to partners who contribute to the health of the population
- Promote a research-based evaluative culture
- Workforce development, including building competence and capacity for public health, particularly throughout the Integrated Joint Board and anchor institutions.
- Commissioning public health interventions, programmes and projects to improve population health in the Western Isles.
- Commissioning services for children in the Western Isles.

The three key areas of public health practice are:

- Health improvement
- Health protection
- Healthcare public health

6. KEY RESULT AREAS

To make optimal use of the best available quantitative and qualitative measures to demonstrate, using a wide range of analytical information and sources, on a quarterly basis the impact of public health interventions, programmes and projects.

Participate in the development of specified areas of partnership working, in particular with the local authority, and the Health and Social Care Partnership.

To initiate action in order to maximise the health improving potential of a wide variety of organisations by establishing public health as an integral part of their agendas through marketing, strategy and policy development, advice and joint working.

To provide leadership and vision for partner organisations to collaborate on issues of common concern, pooling collective capacity and skills to take advantage of emerging opportunities for improving public health.

To champion within the Western Isles the North of Scotland Public Health Network as an effective and efficient way of regional working.

Lead, commission or conduct topic specific health needs assessment activity for the population of the Western Isles in conjunction with the local health intelligence function, and contribute as appropriate to health impact assessment studies and reports on the health of the population of NHS Western Isles. This will involve sourcing and analysing qualitative and quantitative data, identifying trends, drawing conclusions and making recommendations.

Direct and control the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of related major programmes and projects ensuring that agreed outcomes are delivered. This includes health improvement initiatives and interventions, needs assessments, service evaluations (with a focus on services commissioned by the Public Health department), and health impact assessments.

- Participate in the Health Board on call rota and provide specialist health protection advice on a range of situations of varying complexity both during out outside of normal working hours as required. This will require working without direct supervision, and making judgements about evolving situations in which the information is incomplete or emerging. It will involve speaking to patients, carers, and professionals to gather information and provide specialist advice on topics which are sensitive and occasionally distressing, for example the transmission of high consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs).
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- Lead on the development and revision of standard operating procedures for a range of health protection scenarios, including high consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs), drawing on information from a range of sources including national guidance and emerging evidence. This will involve collaborative working with other professional groups including clinicians, and those working in laboratory, pharmacy, infection control, and surveillance teams.

Lead on co-ordination of production of regular progress reports, and present progress and evaluation reports to a wide variety of audiences and events to ensure that the spectrum of staff including those in other relevant agencies and the public are informed of development and progress on public health activities.

May be required to contribute to, or support, the innovation agenda, and research being undertaken nationally, demonstrating a knowledge of health and public health research methodologies and their application.

To lead on the assessment and assurance of quality and effectiveness in public health, ensuring that practice and outcomes are both evidence-based and appropriately evaluated.

Effectively manage physical and digital public health resources, ensuring they are produced, stored, allocated, and utilised appropriately.

Occasionally design and deliver training across the Western Isles on a broad range of topics covering the health improvement, healthcare public health and health protection domains as required.

To identify own training and development needs and undertake appropriate training and development as required, supported by a PDP.

Accountable for adhering to organisational standards of governance with a key role in setting standards ensuring quality and consistency in ensuring people do what they are contracted to do, holding others accountable for their performance as required.

Responsibility for ensuring that systems are in place to improve and address any health and safety, risk, and all governance issues consistent with local and national policies so that safe, effective services are provided at all times.

Line manager for a Public Health Practitioner (Band 5), with a requirement to support and oversee the development of direct report objectives.

Non Budget Holder

Attends, and or completes all NHS Western Isles mandatory training requirements.

7. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK

The framework of regional, local, and national strategies with multi-agency will generate work, which will require translation to local strategy, plans, corporate and personal objectives, and appropriate action.

Work is agreed by the Director of Public Health and Consultant in Public Health. From there the work is self-managed and supervised through the NHS Western Isles' performance appraisal process. Individual objectives will be agreed and signed off annually by the Director of Public Health.

The post holder will be expected to anticipate problems and identify opportunities at a local level and in response to national developments, and to manage solutions and responses.

Decisions regarding projects the postholder is leading lie within the postholder's responsibility.

The Consultant in Public Health and the post holder will hold regular meetings to review ongoing work.

The post holder will pursue a programme of CPD, in accordance with UK Public Health Register Public Health Practitioner requirements, or other recognised body, and undertake revalidation, audit or other measures as appropriate.

Within the context of the overall objectives for the post, the post holder is required to act with a high degree of independence, anticipating potential opportunities and problems and acting to capitalise on these or resolve them largely on their own initiative.

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Regular communications with the Consultant in Public Health, Director of Public Health, and wider Health Board staff through meetings, formal and informal networking, and written reporting to maintain level of awareness of activities, ensure co-ordination and planning of activities and events and to maximise joint working.

Regular communication with partner organisations in the public, private, and third sectors.

Regular communication with public health networks.

Build and manage relationships with clinical and non-clinical colleagues at all levels throughout NHS Western Isles to progress agreed projects.

Multi-agency and cross-sector liaison with input into joint health planning processes, relevant managed clinical networks, and public, private and non-statutory agencies.

Regular communication with the North of Scotland Public Health Network, and the Scottish Public Health Network.

Work in partnership with internal and external stakeholders to effectively manage physical and digital public health resources, ensuring they are produced, stored, allocated, and utilised appropriately.

The post holder will influence groups, committees, and organisations, to maximise the opportunities for improving population health.

Strong presentation and training skills and an ability to express a view convincingly and coherently, verbally and in writing, to a wide range of stakeholders.

9. MOST CHALLENGING PART OF THE JOB

Collaborative leadership for a wide spectrum of public health projects and interventions to tackle a complex range of issues.

Working to bring about change with organisations and individuals where there may be resistance. For example, through supporting organisations and individuals to make changes that improve physical and mental wellbeing, and in turn reduce inequalities, through delivering training and projects.

Developing commitment to public health through stakeholder involvement and the integration of stakeholder contribution, requiring negotiation skills, political astuteness, and relationship building.

Working with a wide range of organisations and individuals to maximise health impact and reduce inequalities across NHS Western Isles, including in instances where conflict or challenging timescales exist.

Developing mechanisms to sustain interventions and initiatives established using short term funding, in the longer term.

Operating across a broad geographic area.

Maintaining knowledge and skills relevant to the role, which may change depending on current projects.

10. SYSTEMS

The post holder is required to demonstrate a competent level of computer literacy in the following areas and applications:

- Laptop and desktop computer
- Videoconferencing equipment
- Audio conferencing equipment
- Computer presentation equipment, including projector
- Photocopier

Much is progressed using videoconferencing, telephone, web and e-mail systems to reduce the need for travel and to optimise time and resources.

- Microsoft Office:

Word for general word processing, preparing documents and report writing

Excel for budget coordination and planning, collation and analysis of numerical data

PowerPoint for presentation of information and data to audiences

Outlook for electronic diary, task management, and e-mail systems

- Intranet and Internet
- HP Zone
- Appraisal and PDP systems, such as Turas
- Expenses and travel systems
- Project management systems

11. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS

Typical decision and judgements:

- The postholder leads on agreed key projects and coordinates ongoing work
- The postholder produces appropriate papers for working groups

- The postholder produces appropriate resources to facilitate training sessions covering the health improvement, healthcare public health and health protection domains as required
- The postholder will work with the Consultant in Public Health to agree the manner in which work is prioritised
- Using the best available evidence and data to inform decisions
- Project management
- The post holder is expected to deal with complex facts and situations requiring analysis, interpretation and comparison of a wide range of options. Judgements are based on in depth analysis, interpretation of health information and evidence of effectiveness of public health interventions
- The post holder must always maintain the complete confidentiality of the material and information that they handle

12. PHYSICAL EFFORT

Long periods of time sitting at a desk operating a computer.

Travelling to deliver training across the Western Isles, requiring journeys to other islands and long periods of time standing.

13. MENTAL EFFORT

Frequently required to concentrate for long periods and may be required to switch tasks with at short knowledge.

Occasional focused concentration required. Periods of focused concentration required when delivering training, presenting to networks and groups, and writing reports.

14. EMOTIONAL EFFORT

Occasionally deals with emotive and sensitive issues, including when interacting with those who have lived experience of a variety of conditions and situations.

Deals groups and organisations concerning contentious or sensitive issues, or service development.

The usual work will have some exposure to emotional stressors, such as when managing health protection enquiries, including while on call. On occasion there may be stressful situations which require sensitive handling in order to ensure those at risk are adequately protected. The postholder will be expected to brief colleagues and organisational partners on stressful situations at short notice.

15. WORKING CONDITIONS

The post is office based with a dedicated desk, computer and telephone.

As the postholder may be required to participate in the Health Board on call rota, they could experience frequent interruptions outside of normal working hours and be required to deal with a range of situations without notice.

16. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT

A separate job description will need to be signed off by each jobholder to whom the job description applies.

Job Holder's Signature:

Date:

Head of Department Signature:


Date: 05.02.2026

PERSON SPECIFICATION


Job Title: Senior Public Health Practitioner
Department: Public Health
Location: NHS Western Isles, Health Board Office, Stornoway

FACTOR	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<p>QUALIFICATIONS TRAINING RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS</p>	<p>Specialist knowledge of Public Health field acquired through relevant Public Health or health related first degree and postgraduate qualification</p>	<p>Public Health Practitioner (or working towards)</p> <p>A project management qualification</p>
<p>EXPERIENCE</p>	<p>Experience across one or more domains of public health</p> <p>Experience in planning, delivering and evaluating training and public health initiatives</p> <p>Experience of healthcare, including working with clinicians and service users</p> <p>Experience in inspiring people to make changes</p> <p>Experience of multidisciplinary working across organisational boundaries</p>	<p>Trained and experienced as a trainer</p> <p>Experience of working on a health protection on call rota</p>
<p>KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS</p>	<p>Effective partnership and relationship building skills</p> <p>Excellent oral and written communication skills, adaptable to a range of organisations and levels</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of research methods relevant to public health and healthcare</p> <p>Understanding of confidentiality issues and the ability to convey sensitive and complex information to a broad range of people</p> <p>A knowledge and understanding of the policy drivers behind public health practice</p>	<p>Leading and managing change</p>

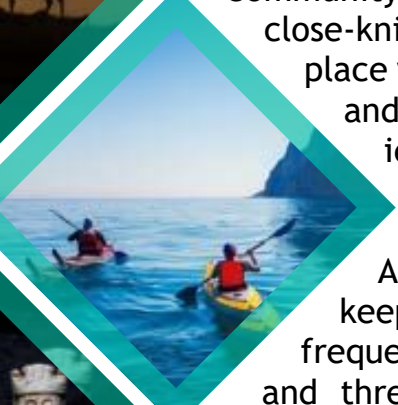
	<p>Ability to adapt to variable and unpredictable demands within own work</p> <p>Ability to empower others</p> <p>Ability to be adaptable to gain support and influence improvements</p> <p>Ability to work collaboratively on delivering improvements</p>	
PERSONAL QUALITIES	<p>Self-belief, evident through a demonstrable “can do” ethos with a sense of confidence to be a shaper rather than a follower</p> <p>High degree of self-awareness, with a sound awareness of own strengths and limitations</p> <p>Demonstrable ability to manage self</p> <p>Demonstrable evidence of a drive for improvement</p> <p>Demonstrable evidence of a high sense of integrity</p> <p>Innovative self-starter, taking responsibility for own actions</p>	




The quality of life in the Western Isles, particularly for those with families, is outstanding: a safe space to bring up children, stress-free commutes with jaw-dropping views, and the opportunity to stroll along our pristine beaches or explore our dramatic scenery on your days off.



Community spirit is at the heart of the Western Isles. It is close-knit and welcoming, residents are proud of the place where they live and are keen to support young and old. The islands have a strong cultural identity stemming from their distinctive history.



Although the islands are remote, you can still keep connected with the wider world. There are frequent transport links to the mainland via ferries and three island airports – Barra, Benbecula, and Stornoway. The Air Discount Scheme (cheaper flights for islanders) and Road Equivalent Tariff (subsidised ferry fares) ensure transport is affordable. High-speed internet is widely available and allows islanders to stay connected globally.



Local Primary and Secondary Schools provide high quality education with the opportunity to learn through the Gaelic language. There is a network of excellent sport and leisure facilities in the Western Isles with annual cultural festivals and venues with live entertainment.

Key worker housing can be applied for through Hebridean Housing Partnership.

Useful Information

cne-siar.gov.uk Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council - for more information on Schools, leisure and culture)
visitouterhebrides.co.uk (for more information on our islands and what to see and do)

A Place to Work

NHS Western Isles employs over 1000 staff over a number of sites, including:

- Ospadal nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Hospital), Stornoway
- Ospadal Uibhist agus Bharraigh (Uist and Barra Hospital), Benbecula
- St Brendan's Hospital, Barra
- A number of GP and Dental Practices across the island chain
- A variety of community-based health services

Being part of a smaller team with a flat management structure provides the opportunity to widen your experience and be involved in a range of planning and decision-making that you might not otherwise experience in a larger setting. Our patients are our community, and there is opportunity to contribute to multi-disciplinary and holistic care to patients and families across healthcare settings.

Support and development are central to NHS Western Isles' ethos, and this involves working in partnership with the University of the Highlands and Islands, NHS Education for Scotland, and other higher education institutions. Our Professional Practice and Learning team will support and advise you on your learning journey. Many opportunities can now be accessed remotely through online learning. Regular clinical training is available and scenario-based learning is available in our recently-installed sim lab.

The Western Isles has a range of employment opportunities in the public and private sector for those that are relocating as a family. Please contact us and we can direct you to vacancies that might be suitable.

All staff are valued equally and we welcome and encourage those from diverse backgrounds to come and work for us.



NHS WESTERN ISLES

BENEFITS

Pay

The NHS pay system is known as Agenda for Change (AfC) which applies to all staff excluding medical, dental and executive level managers.

The benefits include a standard working week of 37 hours, with pay enhancements to reward weekends, nights and overtime working. This ranges from time plus 88% to time plus 30% depending on your pay band and shifts you work.

Distant Islands Allowance is paid to all staff who live in the Western Isles. This is currently £1,406 per year.

Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement is 27 working days, rising to 29 working days after 5 years' service and 33 days after 10 years' service. In addition to this, you are entitled to 8 statutory public holidays every year.

We understand that balancing work and home commitments can sometimes be difficult.

Our policies offer:

- Flexible working including home working
- Paid parental leave
- Paid carer leave
- Paid bereavement leave
- Occupational sick pay scheme

Wellbeing

We recognise that your mental and physical wellbeing is important and we aim to support you in the workplace.

We have a 24-hour confidential helpline to support you and your family through any of life's issues or problems. This includes counselling, family issues, bereavement, financial wellbeing, relationship advice, legal information and more.

NHS Pension Scheme

All new employees will automatically be enrolled in the NHS Pension Scheme, or if you are an existing member your membership will continue.

Key features

- Benefits accrued on a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) basis.
- Normal pension age the same as your State Pension Age.
- Pension accrual rate of 1/54th of pensionable earnings each year.
- Valuable death benefits for your dependents.
- Option to take part of your pension and continue working.

Further information on the benefits of the scheme, can be found at sppa.gov.uk.

Travel & Transport

We participate in the Cycle to Work scheme, enabling you the opportunity to buy a bike tax-free.

Those who need to travel a lot for work will be eligible for a leased car.

Right to Work in the United Kingdom

We will support those that are eligible for a certificate of sponsorship to apply for a work visa. Candidates who require a Certificate of Sponsorship can access further information on the UK Border Agency's new points based system that now governs the way individuals from outside the EEA can work in the UK at bia.homeoffice.gov.uk.

