

# Terminology in public health

Different terms can be confusing so here is a summary of relevant public and population health designations...

**Public health** is most usually defined as “the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society”.

**Population health** is an approach aimed at improving the health of an entire population. It is about improving the physical and mental health outcomes and wellbeing of people, while reducing health inequalities within and across a defined population. It includes action to reduce the occurrence of ill health, including addressing the wider determinants of health, and requires working with communities and partner agencies.

**Population health management** is an “emerging technique for local health and care partnerships to use data to design new models of proactive care and deliver improvements in health and wellbeing which make the best use of the collective resources.” Population health describes an approach that can be applied across all of healthcare, while public health takes a broader approach across the whole of society, including in healthcare.

**Pharmaceutical public health (PPH)** has been described as “the application of pharmaceutical knowledge, skills and resources to the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting, protecting and improving health for all through the organised efforts of society”.

**Integrated care systems (ICSs)** are “geographically based partnerships that bring together providers and commissioners of NHS services with local authorities and other local partners to plan, co-ordinate and commission health and care services”. They became statutory organisations in July 2022.

Community pharmacies are part of **primary care networks (PCNs)**, groups of general practices in local areas serving patient list sizes of 30,000-50,000 and working together with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services to meet local health needs. ICSs and PCNs are geographies used in England.

Nationally, the **Inclusive Pharmacy Practice (IPP)** initiative (from NHS England with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the Association of Pharmacy Technicians and 13 other partner organisations) is increasing the focus on pharmacy teams engaging with local communities, helping to improve their health and addressing inequalities, particularly among those from ethnically diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds. It also focuses on making the workplace more inclusive for pharmacy professionals through having greater awareness, acknowledgement and understanding of religious and cultural beliefs and attitudes, with senior leadership that reflects the diversity of both the pharmacy technician and pharmacist professions.

## Public health institutions

Each of the UK nations has its own named institutes to address all public health domains

National and regional public health institutes/structures				
	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
<b>Health improvement</b>	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities	NHS Health Improvement Scotland/Public Health Scotland	Public Health Wales	Public Health Agency
<b>Health protection</b>	UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)	Public Health Scotland	Public Health Wales; UK Health Security Agency	Public Health Agency
<b>Health service delivery and quality</b>	NHS England/ NHS Improvement/ other NHS bodies; ICS/ICB	NHS Scotland/ other NHS bodies	Public Health Wales	Health and social care trusts
<b>Regional and local organisations</b>	42 integrated care systems 333 local authorities NHS trusts	31 health and care partnerships 14 health boards	7 local health boards	6 health and social care trusts

## Examples of public health training resources for pharmacy teams

**Social prescribing:** [socialprescribingacademy.org.uk](http://socialprescribingacademy.org.uk)  
NHS England has set up an online learning platform to share the latest resources and encourage collaboration. To join the platform, contact:  

- [england.socialprescribing@england.nhs.net](mailto:england.socialprescribing@england.nhs.net)
- [england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing](http://england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing)

**Pharmacists and social prescribing**  
[rpharms.com/recognition/all-our-campaigns/policy-a-z/social-prescribing](http://rpharms.com/recognition/all-our-campaigns/policy-a-z/social-prescribing)

**NICE. Community pharmacies: promoting health and wellbeing**  
[nice.org.uk/guidance/ng102](http://nice.org.uk/guidance/ng102)

**NHS long-term plan: Prevention.**  
[longtermplan.nhs.uk/areas-of-work/prevention](http://longtermplan.nhs.uk/areas-of-work/prevention)

**Public Health Scotland Strategic Plan – 2020-2023**  
[publichealthscotland.scot/our-organisation/a-scotland-where-everybody-thrives-public-health-scotland-s-strategic-plan-2020-to-2023](http://publichealthscotland.scot/our-organisation/a-scotland-where-everybody-thrives-public-health-scotland-s-strategic-plan-2020-to-2023)

**Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together**  
[health-ni.gov.uk](http://health-ni.gov.uk)

**Welsh Government. Community pharmacy contractual framework reform.** [gov.wales/community-pharmacy-contractual-framework-reform](http://gov.wales/community-pharmacy-contractual-framework-reform)

**PSNC Public Health (Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles)**  
[psnc.org.uk/servicescommissioning/essential-services/public-health](http://psnc.org.uk/servicescommissioning/essential-services/public-health)

**Community Pharmacy Scotland**  
[cps.scot/core-2/public-health-service](http://cps.scot/core-2/public-health-service)

**Health Plus pharmacies, Northern Ireland**  
[Health+Pharmacy\(hscni.net\)](http://Health+Pharmacy(hscni.net))

**NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework Essential Service – Promotion of healthy lifestyles (Public Health)**  
[psnc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/service20spec20es42020promotion20of20healthy20lifestyles20\\_v220sept2007\\_.pdf](http://psnc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/service20spec20es42020promotion20of20healthy20lifestyles20_v220sept2007_.pdf)

**Pharmacy and Public Health Forum publications**  
[gov.uk/government/collections/pharmacy-and-public-health-forum-publications](http://gov.uk/government/collections/pharmacy-and-public-health-forum-publications)

**Community pharmacy: public health interventions**  
[gov.uk/government/publications/community-pharmacy-public-health-interventions](http://gov.uk/government/publications/community-pharmacy-public-health-interventions)

**Pharmacy playing a pivotal role in prevention and public health**  
[publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2019/06/28/pharmacy-playing-a-pivotal-role-inprevention-and-public-health](http://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2019/06/28/pharmacy-playing-a-pivotal-role-inprevention-and-public-health)

**CPPE e-learning on public health**  
[cppe.ac.uk/services/public-health](http://cppe.ac.uk/services/public-health)

**NHS Education Scotland:** [nes.scot.nhs.uk/our-work/pharmacy](http://nes.scot.nhs.uk/our-work/pharmacy)

**Northern Ireland Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development:** [nicpld.org](http://nicpld.org)

**Health Education and Improvement Wales (Pharmacy):**  
[wcpe.org.uk](http://wcpe.org.uk)

**Making Every Contact Count (MECC):** implementation guide  
[assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/769488/MECC\\_implementation\\_guide\\_v2.pdf](http://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/769488/MECC_implementation_guide_v2.pdf)