



## The Regulation of Public Health Professionals Healthy Lives, Healthy People Public Health White Paper Consultation

### Joint Statement from the Faculty of Public Health, the Royal Society for Public Health and the UK Public Health Register 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011

The Faculty of Public Health, the Royal Society for Public Health and the UK Public Health Register have come together to issue a joint statement about their commitment to working together for a multidisciplinary public health, which is governed by common standards and robust regulatory arrangements.

The direction of the Coalition Government is to create a new and integrated national public health service, Public Health England, to drive improvements in health and to put Directors of Public Health at the centre of local government to ensure authoritative, independent and influential leadership for local health and health services.

This begs the need for a continuing strong multi-disciplinary public health profession competent across health improvement, protection and healthcare and fit to analyse and make judgments on public investment and public safety. The public health profession must, therefore, be governed by; Standards to set the bar for expertise, experience and knowledge; and Regulation to ensure that its professionals maintain high standards of practice.

Standards for public health specialist practice are set by the Faculty of Public Health. We endorse the continuing professional leadership of the Faculty of Public Health in relation to setting the standards for public health.

Regulation for public health specialists with equivalent roles and responsibilities is currently through statutory (e.g. the General Medical Council) or non-statutory (e.g. the UK Public Health Register) routes depending on their professional background.

Ideally we would wish to move to statutory regulation but recognise that this may require primary or secondary legislation. In the meantime, we would wish to build on the achievement of the UKPHR, to further develop robust regulatory arrangements and move them as close to statutory regulation as possible.

By 'robust' we mean regulatory arrangements which motivate and commit people to improvement and which involve:

- high standards (professional and ethical) that are well-defined and understood and that have the confidence of the profession, the public and employers;
- a framework which is simple, clear and readily understood; and
- revalidation to ensure registrants remain competent to practice, sitting alongside fitness to practice processes.

We believe that the question of regulation needs to be progressed as part of the development of the Public Health Workforce Strategy in the autumn.

We would want to work as a joint group with the Department of Health and other relevant bodies, in particular Public Health England, the NHS Commissioning Board and local government, to develop and implement public health workforce strategy and regulation.