



From looking at food through to thinking about mental health, public health research is wide-ranging

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Fuse named in 25 million funded School for Public Health Research refresh

Academics at Northumbria University will continue to be part of a prestigious collaboration bringing together England's leading public health research expertise.

The [National Institute for Health Research](#) (NIHR) has announced that [Fuse](#), the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health, has been successful in retaining its membership of the NIHR School for Public Health Research for the School's third five-year term.

Northumbria University is part of Fuse, a partnership of public health researchers across the five universities in the North East. A founding member of the School for Public Health Research (SPHR), Fuse's continued membership will bring significant research funding through to 2027.

Fuse Associate Director [Susan Carr](#), Professor of Public Health Research from Northumbria's [Department of Social Work, Education and Community Wellbeing](#), said: "Being a member of the School for Public Health Research through Fuse enables academics from Northumbria University, and across the North East, to work with communities and practitioners to tackle real-world problems and create solutions that make an impact on people's lives.

"From looking at food through to thinking about mental health, the range of public health is broad but all of it applies to our everyday lives.

"We are very excited that we have the opportunity to continue to develop our research in SPHR over the next five years."

Working together to advance public health

Established in April 2012, the renewed [NIHR SPHR](#) is an extended partnership between nine leading centres of academic public health research excellence across England. It aims to build the evidence base for effective public health practice by bringing together expertise in one virtual organisation.

The school conducts applied public health research to increase the volume and quality of evidence on cost-effective interventions. It supports local public health practitioners and policy makers to engage with research and seek out research evidence to inform their decisions.

The next round of the school, which has been awarded £25 million from April 2022, will advance and extend the school's current research themes of children, young people and families, public mental health, and places and communities.

The school will continue to be led by Fuse Director Ashley Adamson, Professor of Public Health Nutrition at Newcastle University.

Professor Ashley Adamson said: “I am thrilled that SPHR has received further funding to continue its world-class public health research, influencing policy and practice in the UK.

“Working in partnership with those developing and delivering public health means we have the most relevant and important questions.

“I’m honoured to continue as Director of NIHR SPHR, working with excellent academic and practice colleagues and members of the public to drive forward our research agenda to meet the evidence needs to reduce inequalities in health and improve the health of the public.

“I am delighted that our capacity building funding creates further opportunity for SPHR to work with the NIHR Academy and others to build a future public health workforce equipped for the challenges ahead.”

With the Government’s increasing attention on prevention, public health research and recovering from the pandemic, the contribution of the school is of strategic importance to the Department of Health and Social Care.

Professor Lucy Chappell, NIHR Chief Executive, said: “The NIHR’s investment in the School for Public Health Research has generated valuable local evidence that has informed Local Authority spending and planning to improve child health and create healthier neighbourhoods.

“With the new £25m, the NIHR SPHR will continue to address key challenges in public health while expanding geographic reach and ensuring research takes place where it is needed most.”

Driving evidence-based planning

The school’s previous successes include exploring the nature and acceptability of local authority actions to restrict the spread of hot-food takeaways in England. This research has helped planners and public health professionals to create healthier neighbourhoods through regulation by giving them the objective, evidence-based food environment data they need to identify priority areas for regulation.

A further success includes harnessing data on child poverty, infant mortality,

child physical activity and obesity to improve child health. The research has informed Local Authority spending and planning, contributed to debates and reviews, generated evidence to inform pandemic recovery planning, and secured further funding.

Following an open competition the school will be joined by two new members in the University of Exeter and a consortium of the Universities of Birmingham, Keele and Warwick.

Members of the NIHR School for Public Health Research 2022-2027:

- Fuse, the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health (Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside Universities)
- University of Sheffield
- University of Cambridge
- University of Birmingham collaboration with the Universities of Warwick and Keele (PHRESH) – new member
- London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- University of Bristol
- Liverpool and Lancaster Universities Collaboration for Public Health (LiLaC)
- Imperial College
- University of Exeter – new member

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