

**GHANA COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND
SURGEONS**

FACULTY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME IN
PUBLIC HEALTH**

April 2012

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Public Health (FPH) was established in 2004 as part of the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons (GCPS) with the mandate to carry out specialist training and research in the different subspecialties in public health that would provide solutions for national development in Ghana.

The Public Health Fellowship Training Programme (PHFP) will prepare physicians for future leadership roles in public health at national, regional and district levels of the health system. PHFP will be competency based training and residents through didactic and structured practical experience will develop broad range of knowledge and skills in applied research, professionalism and management, communication in addition to developing skills in their specific discipline of concentration. Residents will have the opportunity of participating in the core public health functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance in varied field sites in the country.

Graduates from the programme will be equipped with appropriate analytic skills and knowledge to identify public health problems and design solutions to those problems, plan and execute field-based applied research, and have good communication skills.

Our **vision** is to build a network of highly skilled public health specialists who are measurably improving people's health.

Our **mission** is to contribute to the improvement of health of the people in Ghana and beyond through the pursuit of excellence in competency based training in the various disciplines of public health, and through provision of services during the training.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF PROGRAMME

- To strengthen public health capacity by developing a cadre of highly skilled public health specialists
- To contribute to research activities on priority public health problems
- To improve communications and networking of public health practitioners and researchers in the country

3.0 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for eligibility for registration for the Fellowship programme in Public Health:

- 3.1 A practitioner with Membership in Public Health of GCPS or WACP or equivalent
- 3.2 A practitioner with at least one year post membership work experience in Ghana
- 3.3 A practitioner registered with the Ghana Medical and Dental Council

4.0 DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The duration of the Fellowship programme will be two years

5.0 COMPETENCIES AND CORE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

5.1 Competencies

The public health fellowship programme is competency-based, developing a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitude of residents in public health practice. All residents will build critical competencies in the following domains: research process, communication, computer technology, professionalism and management, and teaching and mentoring. The acquisition and mastering of competencies in each domain is facilitated through core learning activities that are integrated into the placement and field experience of the residents.

The competencies for all residents of the public health faculty are shown below in Table 1:

Table 1. Competencies

Domain	Competency
Research Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and assess actual or potential problems of public health importance 2. Review and synthesize a body of research literature 3. Formulate testable hypotheses that reflect knowledge of the problem and appreciation of research principles 4. Design studies that are consistent with the nature of the problem 5. Conduct studies that are consistent with the developed hypotheses and study design 6. Organize and manage data in a way that permits efficient and accurate analyses 7. Analyze data collected from study using appropriate statistical techniques for the developed hypotheses and study design 8. Interpret and explain the results of study in a manner that is consistent with the data 9. Recommend logical and practical public health actions that are consistent with the interpretation of the study
Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Present research findings and other reports orally to scientific audiences and in writing to a peer-reviewed journal
Computer Technology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Use computers efficiently and effectively for the research process
Professionalism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Show professional judgment by making decisions and initiating action after a clear and rational consideration of pertinent data and possible consequences 13. Develop own personal learning objectives and evaluate progress to achieving these objectives 14. Work effectively as a member of a health team 15. Assume a leadership role when appropriate
Teaching and Mentoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Train public health professionals 17. Mentor public health professionals

5.2 Core Learning Activities

Developing proficiency in competencies will be through the completion of core learning activities which provide services to the Ministry of Health, and Ghana Health Services. Progress in developing proficiency in the competencies will be ongoing and through partnership with field supervisors and mentors of the college.

Table 2. Core learning activities (CLA) for all fellowship residents in the public health faculty

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Write a dissertation protocol2. Plan and carry out a protocol based study or survey to assess a health problem of public health importance3. Write scientific papers suitable for publication in peer-reviewed journals4. Teach on the Membership programme of the faculty and/or serve as a mentor for health trainees5. Participate in the planning and implementation or evaluation of a programme, project, or urgent response that addresses a public health problem6. Participate in health policy development

6.0 STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

The Fellowship programme in Public Health will consist of:

- a) Didactics- Seminars, presentations, and recommended courses
- b) Public health practice or Practical Attachment to subspecialty area
 - (1. Overview – assessment – planning – implementation – evaluation)
 - (2. Health policy development)

- c) Research project leading to the production of a dissertation
 - (1. Identify topic and supervisors – literature review – methods and data collection – analysis – write up and presentation

SUBSPECIALTIES

1. Family and Reproductive Health
2. Applied Epidemiology and Disease Control
3. Health Policy and Leadership
4. Occupational and environmental health

7.0 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

1. Submit a work plan on 31 January and 31 July of each year
2. One year attachment to a subspecialty area
3. Prepare a dissertation proposal
4. Prepare one scientific paper suitable for publication in peer-reviewed journal
5. Take courses in research methods, statistical computing, scientific communication, and leadership and management
6. Teach on the Membership programme of the Faculty
7. Attend monthly seminars organized by the faculty

8.0 ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

8.1 Work review

Log books and core activity outputs will be reviewed regularly. Reviews will take the form of meetings between faculty staff and resident. During these meetings, the resident will present their activity reports followed by discussions. Written feedback on the work review and assessment of the resident's progress will be provided.

8.2 Final assessment and examination include the following:

1. The defense of the dissertation proposal at the end of the first year
2. The examination of the bound volume of residents work over the two year period
3. The defense of the completed dissertation

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE

The resident at the end of the first year will prepare a 30-45 minutes presentation of the dissertation proposal and present it before a Dissertation Committee formed by the faculty. The committee members will pose questions and issues for discussion.

A grade of Pass will be based on the presentation of an acceptable proposal and demonstration of a satisfactory level of knowledge on the dissertation subject and related areas. If the dissertation proposal is not approved, the examination is rescheduled

EXAMINATION OF PORTFOLIO OF WORK AND LOG BOOK

The portfolio of work is examined by a panel that includes external examiners selected from persons with experience in the resident's area of specialty.

The portfolio of work should contain evidence that all the core activities and competencies have been achieved, and should also include a summary of the practical experience gained during the field assignments (log book)

DISSERTATION DEFENSE

A Dissertation Committee will be set up by the faculty. The committee will examine the residents on the dissertation for approval. The "defense" will be composed of an open presentation by the resident followed by a closed meeting with the dissertation committee. The committee should have a copy of the draft at least four weeks prior to the final defense. The oral defense is held only after all members of the committee have had an adequate opportunity to review a draft of the dissertation. The committee may, at the time of the final oral examination, require alterations and corrections.

9.0 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME PROGRESSION

Duration of Training: Two years

A. DIDACTICS

- Monthly Public Health Seminars
- Recommended Courses
 - Research Methods
 - Leadership and management
 - Statistical Computing – STATA, SAS, SPSS
 - Scientific Communication

B. PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE IN SUBSPECIALTY (12 MONTHS)

C. DISSERTATION

- Problem identification
- Identification of supervisors – at least 2 one of which is a Fellow
- Consult regularly with supervisors – at least once every two weeks
- Proposal writing
- Proposal defense
- Data collection and analysis
- Notice to submit dissertation – Three months before intended date with an abstract
- Submission of dissertation – Three loosely bound copies and electronic version
- Examiners – External and Internal. Two months to read and give written reports
- Defense – Examination board
- Results
 - Pass with no corrections
 - Minor corrections – 3 months
 - Major corrections – 6 months
 - Resubmission – 12 months
- Certificate of correction
- Final submission of dissertation – Three full bound copies
- Graduation

10.0 DISSERTATION FORMAT AND GUIDELINES FOR WRITING PROPOSAL

Outline of Dissertation Proposal Format and Guidelines for Fellowship Programme

The dissertation proposal document should include the following sections:

1. Title page
2. Abstract (500 words)
3. Table of Content
4. Introduction
5. Literature Review
6. Materials and Methods
7. Ethical and Legal Considerations
8. Logistics and Time Schedule
9. Budget/Resources
10. References
11. Appendices

The proposal format and some guidelines for writing the proposal

1. The **Title Page** should be as shown below:

Title Page

Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons
Name of Faculty

Title of the Proposed Study

**for the conferment *of a Fellow of the Ghana College of Physicians
(FGCP)***

Author (full name & surname)

Resident number (if applicable)

Month, Year

2. Abstract (500 words)

The following questions must be answered, without including the question:

- Why is the study necessary? (Introduction)
- What are you going to do? (Aims)
- How are you going to do the study? (Methods)
- What will be the study outputs?
- What is the projected impact of the study?

3. Table of Content

Include the different headings and subheading as in your proposal.

4. Introduction

Content will be determined according to your proposal, but should include the following: (don't use as subheadings)

- Why this subject is important
- Historical background
- What factors lead to and why the study was initiated
- Definition of the problem/hypothesis/research question
- Justification of your study (based on the above aspects: e.g. importance of subject, gaps in knowledge, etc...)

5. Literature Review

Review of relevant information about subject matter

6. Materials and Methods

6.1 Study design

6.2 Study Setting

6.3 Study population and sampling

6.3.1 Study population

(inclusion and exclusion criteria)

6.3.2 Sampling method

6.3.3 Sample size

6.4 Measurements

- Measurement tools (e.g. clinical examination, questionnaire...)
- Measurement methods (detailed description of how measurements will be done)
- Variables: list variables here grouped according to exposure and outcome variables if relevant. Detailed description of "case status" or exposure status (if applicable)
- Validity and reliability of measurement instrument (if applicable)
- Quality control

6.5 Pilot study

6.6 Data Management and analysis

- the analysis section should detail the appropriate statistical methods to be used to analyse the data and not just which statistical software was used to analyse the data.

7. Ethical and legal considerations

- Approval of study by the relevant departments
- Consent procedures (proposal should give a brief description of the methods to be used obtain consent for the study to allow an estimation that the study follows acceptable ethical principles. This will include sections on
 - A general description of the study and why the individual is being invited to take part in the study
 - Voluntary participation (no one will be forced to take part in the study)
- Privacy of information/confidentiality
- Potential harms and benefits
- Justice
- Conflict of interest

8. Logistics and time schedule

- **Project management timetable (Action Plan and or Gantt chart)**
- **Responsibilities of staff and/or investigators (Contributors and Authorship)**

9. Budget/ Resources

- **Available resources**
- **Budget and budget motivation**

10. References

- Correct and complete reference system e.g. Vancouver system
- Use EndNote software for ease of referencing

There is the need for the College to have a standard reference style or styles.

We can follow the reference style recommended by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, Uniform Requirements for Manuscript submitted to Biomedical Journal, April 2010

11. Appendices:

- Data collection instrument
- Letters of approval
- Ethics Consent forms

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE FORMAT OF THE FINAL DISSERTATION

Dissertation Report Specifications (final report)

The general guidelines for the final dissertation report are given below.

The document must be written in the following format

- The typeface should be 12-point font size, 1.5 or double spacing;
- The report must be professional, i.e. have indents, spacing, headers, footers, page numbers, titles and an index page, bold typeface, italics, and other editing facilities, where appropriate;
- It must have an abstract;
- Graphs or tables, made either by the resident or downloaded from the Internet must be used to illustrate the dissertation;
- The document must be checked for spelling errors;

1. Introductory pieces

- Title Page

The front page **MUST** carry the following information:

(the full title of the dissertation) by (the full name of the resident and resident number)

Submitted to the Faculty of (Faculty's name), in partial fulfillment for the conferment of a Fellow of the Ghana College of Physicians or Surgeons (Year and date of submission).

- Declaration page

This page contains a statement to the effect that the research report is the resident's own work, and that it has not been used for other degrees or diplomas in the past.

Example:

"I declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit to the Faculty of Public Health for the conferment of a fellow of the Ghana College of Physicians, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at any university".

- Certification page (supervisors' signatures)
- Acknowledgement page
- Abstract (with keywords)

A summary/abstract of not more than 500 words. For our purposes, use four headings: introduction, methods, results, and conclusions.

- Table of Contents
- List of Tables
- List of Figures
- Abbreviations

2. Introduction

- Background to research
- Statement of Research problem
- Justification for the research
- Research questions
- Hypotheses
- Objectives

3. Literature Review

- Introduction
- Headings
- Headings
- Headings

4. Methodology

- Study area
- Study design
- Study population and sampling
- Measurements
- Data management and Analysis
- Ethical considerations
- Limitations

5. Results

- Headings
- Headings

6. Discussion

- Headings
- Headings
- Conclusion
- Recommendations

7. References

8. Appendices: Please include the following :

- Data collection tools
- Consent forms
- Permission letter from ethics committee

Submission of the Dissertations and Journal article

Residents must submit three loosely bound copies of the dissertation, and the journal article/s at the same time, at least two months before the final examination. The electronic version of both dissertation and journal article should also be submitted. The journal article/s must conform to the instructions for authors of the journal that have been selected for publication.