

# Camden & Islington Public Health Directorate

**Name:** Dr. Inês Campos Matos

**Job:** Public Health Officer

**Sector:** Public; Health Policy (UK Local Authority)

**Location:** London, United Kingdom

**Interviewer:** Diogo Martins (LSHTM MScPH 2016-17)

**Date:** 29/03/2017

## Information interview

**Career background:** Academic - graduated in Medicine (Portugal, 2009); MSc Public Health (LSHTM, 2011-12); current PhD student in International Health/Health Policy looking at health inequalities in Europe and Portugal (Portugal, 2013-present); Fulbright visiting research scholar (Harvard, 2014). Professional - foundation year medical doctor (Portugal, 2010); concluded Public Health medical training programme, which included a 6 months' traineeship at Public Health England (Portugal, 2011-2016).

**Average day in the job:** Although the Public Health Officer (PHO) job mainly consists of desk work (9-5pm schedule), it is embedded in a very dynamic environment with constant meetings with the Public Department and with other individuals from health services (hospitals, trusts, GPs, CCGs, private providers).

**Most relevant skills:** Project and financial management skills are key for this position. Good interpersonal skills are extremely important since most of the work involves meeting with different people and helping them to develop their work. Communication and writing competencies are also relevant considering that the message we work with must be understood by a wide audience, coming from different backgrounds.

**Most valuable things at LSHTM:** LSHTM provided an essential foundation for my career development, particularly with the basic tools to improve my technical competencies. But most importantly, it was about the people I met and to whom I am still in contact with nowadays.

**Pieces of advice:** Subscribe to the [NHS newsletter jobs](#), where new opportunities arrive to your inbox every week. If you are interested in a particular position, study well the job description, showcase your knowledge and how you can make the difference to the organisation and to the position in particular. Even more than your CV, your enthusiasm is extremely important. Essential requirements: ask yourself how your previous experience can fulfil those job requirements.

## Camden & Islington Public Health Directorate

*“Health promotion and reduction of health inequalities in our local population”*

**General description:** The Public Health Directorate is focussed on reducing inequalities in health in the two boroughs - Camden and Islington. A Public Health Officer (PHO) is responsible for “project management to contribute to the directorate's goals of assessing the health needs of the local population, looking at outcomes of health care and working on initiatives to reduce health inequalities and improve the overall health of local people.” As PHOs, we develop and monitor contracts that address different health inequalities (e.g. provision of smoking cessation services). Our work mainly consists of budget management and commissioning. Nonetheless, we respond to the electorate of those specific councils.

**Recruitment system:** Rolling basis, according to the needs.

**Entry-level opportunities/internships:** There is no specific programme for graduates. However, there are cases of people who finished their Master’s programmes and have started working at the Directorate without significant working experience. Internships are possible, but not commonly for graduate students.

**Ideal profile for candidates:** Despite different backgrounds, the clear majority of my colleagues has a Master’s degree in Public Health. Previous working experience in Public Health (such as in health management, policy and research) is a plus. Try to find as many opportunities as possible, learn and reflect from your own experiences. Don’t worry if you end up in a position that was not your first option: you can still gain transferable skills that will certainly be useful to your future.

### Contacts:

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