

The Health Foundation directorates

Graduate trainee programme 2026/27

At the Health Foundation we are structured into five directorates: Health and Care Policy and Research, Health Inequalities, Analysis, Communications and Corporate Services. All directorates across the Foundation will host graduate trainees for 2026/27.

Details of each placement will be made available to shortlisted candidates, and you will be asked to rank your placement preferences.

Health and Care Policy and Research

Health and Care Policy

The Health and Care Policy team focuses on shaping the future of the health and care system to ensure the best care for all. We do this by supporting more evidence-informed policy and decision-making on health and care. The team combines a focus on analysing and informing the overall direction of the NHS and social care in England – including the performance of the health and care system and priorities for improvement and reform – with deep expertise in key policy areas we think are central to the future of the health system. This includes primary and community services and policy on AI and technology.

We focus primarily on public policy and analyse health and care policy in its political context. Much of the team's work involves in-house research and analysis, as well as bringing policymakers and others together to influence and inform thinking and decision-making. But we also fund research, evaluation, and other programmes delivered with partners externally – often large contracts spanning multiple years.

Research

The Research team drives high-quality, influential research, evaluation and evidence by designing commissioning and mobilising work that generates insight and solutions. We deliver this through four functions:

- Providing oversight of best practice in research and evaluation.
- Designing high-quality research and evaluation.
- Curating the best available evidence.
- Commissioning best value research and evaluation.

The Research team includes a mix of skilled experts in research, evaluation and funding. We collaborate with teams across the organisation to support our thematic programme objectives and lead on organisational development initiatives that enable the Foundation to achieve its mission.

Health and Inequalities

The biggest factors that shape health and inequalities lie outside health care. Yet governments repeatedly prioritise the NHS over broader investments and policies to help people live healthier lives. It is too easy for action on the building blocks of health – like decent housing and good jobs – to slip down political priorities.

We have established ourselves as an authoritative voice on the society-wide action needed to improve health and reduce health inequalities by focusing on these building blocks. We will continue to provide evidence and analysis on the factors that shape these and offer a

comprehensive narrative on the need for coordinated action across government and society. But we will also go deeper on the key building blocks where we can have an impact – including work and the economy, and health risks like obesity and alcohol. We will expand the share of our resources going into this work on health and inequalities.

Analysis

Our core purpose is to generate evidence that supports the Foundation's mission. Working collaboratively, we use economic analysis, data science, modelling and evaluation to shape thinking and influence decision-making about the most important issues affecting health and care in the UK.

We provide insights about both population health and health and care system performance, including problems, their causes and potential solutions, and the impact of complex change programmes.

We use our analysis both to influence national policymakers, system leaders, and wider stakeholders, and to shape the Foundation's work programme. We drive forward best practice in data engineering and data management by keeping patient data secure and well governed, as well as ensuring its effective use across the platforms we use at the Foundation.

Communications

The Communications team plays a key role in achieving the Foundation's mission to build a healthier UK by ensuring our work reaches and influences a range of audiences, and by delivering high-quality communications that build our brand, reputation and impact. The team also plays an important role in ensuring our staff are informed and engaged by delivering effective internal communications. The directorate incorporates four functional teams: Corporate Communications and Engagement, Content, Brand and Digital, External Affairs and Internal Communications.

Corporate Services and Investments

The Corporate Services and Investments directorate consists of six main teams: Finance, Investments, People, Technology, Change, and Governance. The team's role is organisational-wide and is to enable the implementation of the Foundation's strategy, and the mission to make the Foundation a great place to work. They do this through delivering the very best support services and processes that drive and underpin the development and delivery of our strategy and business plan, and by continually improving our people approaches, operational processes and alignment to our values.