



Distinguished lecture series: conversations on the future of public health

'Health in an ageing society', Friday 8 December 2023, 10.30am – 12.00pm

Speaker biographies

Professor Chris Whitty

Chief Medical Officer for England

Professor Chris Whitty is Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for England, the UK government's Chief Medical Adviser and head of the public health profession.

Chris is an epidemiologist and has undertaken public health and clinical research and worked as a doctor in the UK, Africa and Asia. He was Professor of Public and International Health at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) before becoming CMO and remains an honorary professor, and visiting Professor of Public Health at Gresham College. He is also an NHS physician.

Chris was the Chief Scientific Adviser for the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) from January 2016 to August 2021, and head of the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), the government's major funder of public health, clinical social care and translational research. He was on the Executive Board of the WHO.

Chris was the interim Government Chief Scientific Adviser from 2017 to 2018, including during the Novichok poisonings. Before that, he was the Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department for International Development (DFID), which included leading technical work on the West Africa Ebola outbreak and other international health emergencies.



Professor Kevin Fenton

President, Faculty of Public Health

Kevin Fenton is the President of the Faculty of Public Health. He is a senior public health expert and infectious disease epidemiologist who has worked in a variety of public health executive leadership roles across government and academia in the United Kingdom and internationally. His specialist interests are in tackling health inequalities, infectious disease prevention and control, climate justice and urban health.

Professor Fenton is the Regional Director for London in the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) within the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). Within this role, he is also the statutory public health advisor to the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority and the Regional Director of Public Health for NHS London. He is also the government's Chief Advisor on HIV and Chair of the HIV Action Plan Implementation Steering Group for England.



Professor Graham Ellis, Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Scotland

Professor Graham Ellis is the Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, supporting the Chief Medical Officer to provide advice to ministers and working closely with a number of doctors within the Civil Service. Professor Ellis trained as a Geriatrician, working as a consultant in NHS Lanarkshire since 2006 and has been a clinician with the Hospital at Home Service since 2011.

In 2020, Professor Ellis was instrumental in setting up an Older People's Policy Unit within the Safety and Quality Improvement Division of Scottish Government, and prior to this was appointed as the National Clinical Advisor for Ageing Health. In 2018 he was appointed as Honorary Professor at Glasgow Caledonian Universities Department of Health and Life Sciences, and National Clinical Lead for Frailty within Health Improvement Scotland in 2016.

Professor Ellis has worked in medical management within NHS Lanarkshire and has research interest in the organisation of acute services for older people. He was the founder and first president of the UK Hospital at Home society, founded in 2020.



Dr Sebastian Walsh, NIHR Doctoral Fellow

Dr Sebastian Walsh (MBChB, MPhil, MFPH) is an NIHR Doctoral Fellow in Public Health at the University of Cambridge, and a Public Health Specialty Registrar in the East of England. His research uses mixed methods to develop the evidence base for population-level approaches to dementia risk reduction, with a particular focus on local authorities in England. His background is as an applied public health academic, and he has been training as a public health specialty registrar in the East of England region since 2018. He qualified from Keele Medical School in 2015, and passed an MPhil in Public Health with distinction at the University of Cambridge in 2019.



Dr Amrita Jesurasa, Consultant in PH and National Lead for Prevention in Clinical Settings in Wales

Dr Amrita Jesurasa is a Consultant in Public Health and national lead for 'Prevention in Clinical Settings' in Public Health Wales. Amrita's portfolio focuses on embedding prevention in the health and care system, particularly to address the behavioural and clinical risk factors, which contribute most to the burden of disease in Wales. Within this portfolio, Amrita leads a number of programmes, including the All Wales Diabetes Prevention Programme and programmes of work on obesity prevention in primary and community care, social prescribing, and developing a coordinated approach to prevention in the health and care system.

After qualifying as a doctor from Imperial College London in 2005, Amrita initially trained in paediatrics, before beginning training in public health in Yorkshire & Humber, during which time Amrita was also an Honorary Clinical Lecturer at the University of Sheffield. Amrita was appointed to her current substantive post in Public Health Wales in 2020. In 2021, Amrita successfully applied for and commenced a NICE Fellowship, which complimented her consultant portfolio, as it looked at ways to embed NICE guidelines related to prevention, through influencing contractual, strategic and operational levers. Having attended Harvard Business School's Value-Based Healthcare Intensive Seminar in January 2023, Amrita is also looking at ways that this approach can support embedding prevention in the health and care system.

