



## Information for International Educated Client Looking to Work as a Health Policy Researcher/Analyst

### OVERVIEW

Health policy researchers/analysts conduct research, produce reports, and manage health-care policies and programs. They may specialize in an area such as addiction or mental health.

These analysts help develop government health policy by providing advice on issues such as health promotion, regulation, and standards. Researchers may design and carry out health projects or programs; maintain, update and manage health information databases; may collect and analyze statistics provided by public and private health-care organizations and produce reports. They may monitor and evaluate health-care projects and programs operated by government, agencies or private organizations/clients. They may be self-employed as a consultant.

Health policy analysts have the primary responsibility of evaluating current policies in the medical field and suggesting adjustments that will improve patient services. They are critical thinkers with the examination skills to draw logical conclusions from complex legal information. Analysts compile useful data from research literature, polls, surveys, census data, and expert interviews to identify the expected impact of policy changes. Their in-depth knowledge of the political landscape is used to weigh the costs and benefits of proposed health policies. Typical tasks include meeting with government officials, estimating healthcare budgets, crafting policy proposals, researching whether policy goals are met, raising public awareness of healthcare policies, and monitoring events with medical implications.

Qualitative and quantitative analytical skills to research the efficiency of current policies are essential. Health policy analysts need technical skills to handle research data and build conceptual models. They need to continually stay current on political topics affecting healthcare. Being a skilled communicator with good public speaking and writing skills is essential to present policy recommendations concisely. Health policy analysts also need logical reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making skills to form appropriate government solutions

### EMPLOYMENT AREAS

Health policy researchers work for government departments and agencies; consulting companies; universities and other post-secondary institutions; research labs, hospitals;

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community agencies; professional associations; non-governmental organizations or international organizations.

Other titles for this career include health care planner, health promotion program officer, or health services researcher.

Some employers (usually in the private sector) treat health policy analysts as entry-level or lower-level roles, so it is technically possible to become an analyst with a bachelor's degree. However, most policy analysts in the health and health services sector have master's degrees.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Generally, health policy analysts:

- Gather and analyze statistical information and write reports.
- Develop health policies by collecting and analyzing statistical data.
- Design, implement, and monitor programs.
- Maintain, update, and manage health information databases.
- Distribute program and policy information within their organization and to the public
- Write newsletters and other documents on health policy for the organization or the public

## EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

A minimum bachelor's degree in health science, public or healthcare administration or health informatics is required. There are also public policy and public affairs degree programs at the undergraduate level. Some aspiring policy analysts even opt for degrees in politics, social work, or economics.

A graduate degree in health, social science or administration may be required as well as several years experience as a health care professional. Some graduate degree programs require applicants to have work experience. Most health policy analysts earn either a one- or two-year Master of Public Policy (MPP) degree or a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree with a public health policy specialization—or a hybrid of the two, the MPP/MPH. The public health MPP is probably the best degree for an aspiring health policy analyst.

Regardless of the major chosen, look for opportunities to complete internships in healthcare settings, government agencies, policy and planning settings, or other public

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and private settings related to health policy. Work in these settings will provide the opportunity to see how health policy is created and undertake research and data analysis.

Project management, data analysis, research, technical writing, the ability to work well in teams and have experience with current health policies are important skills to have.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

- ***CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICY RESEARCH (CAHSPR)***

Regular membership in this association provides researchers with the opportunity to support health services and policy research in Canada and network with others with similar interests. Membership provides full online access to the Health Policy Journal and to membership in various theme groups.

- ***CANADIAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION (CPHA)***

CPHA advocates for public health at all levels of government and provides opportunities to be involved on projects, practicums, resources, and training.

- ***PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF BC (PHABC)***

PHABC is a voluntary, non-profit, non-government, organization that provides leadership to promote health, well-being and social equity through advocacy, collaboration, education and research and do this work through the spectrum of public health practice; including prevention, promotion, protection and policy. Most of their work is undertaken by volunteers and membership is open to anyone interested in public health.

Their identified priorities are eliminating poverty; reducing health/socioeconomic inequities; addressing climate change and healthy environments; contributing to a sustainable, equitable economy; and preventing violence.

## **HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AT UBC**

The Division of Health Services and Policy in the UBC Faculty of Medicine, School of Population and Public Health (SPPH) encompasses a range of disciplines and fields including health services research, health policy, health economics, health systems and health ethics. Activities within the Division address the organization, regulation, accessibility and utilization of health care resources, and the resulting costs and effects.

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Topics of interest include large data administration, health and pharmaceutical policy, health reform, organizational change, health care financing, cost-effectiveness, health technologies, program evaluation, priority setting, quality and outcomes of health care, health information, social determinants, health disparities and knowledge translation.

Several research centres also are associated with the Division, including the:

- [Centre for Health Services and Policy Research \(CHSPR\)](#)
- [Centre for Health Evaluation and Outcomes Sciences \(CHEOS\)](#)
- [Centre for Clinical Epidemiology and Evaluation \(C2E2\)](#)
- [Centre for Applied Ethics \(CAE\)](#)
- [Collaboration for Outcomes Research and Evaluation \(CORE\)](#)
- [Human Early Learning Partnership \(HELP\)](#)
- [National Core for Neuroethics.](#)

The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research in British Columbia is BC's health and research funding agency.

The BC Primary Health Care Research Network (Twitter @BC\_PHCRN) supports evidence informed changes in the delivery of primary and integrated health care.

## REFERENCES

Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) - <http://cahspr.ca/>

Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) - <https://www.cpha.ca/>

Canadian Public Health Association (projects) - <https://www.cpha.ca/projects>

Canadian Public Health Services - <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/public-health-practice/canadian-public-health-service.html>

Canadian Institute of Health Research (CHIR) - <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/13733.html>

Government of Canada Job Board (Health Policy) - <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/jobs/23040/BC>

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Health Policy Research (Articles) in Canada -

[https://scholar.google.ca/scholar?q=Health+policy+research+in+Canada&hl=en&as\\_sdt=0&as\\_vis=1&oi=scholar](https://scholar.google.ca/scholar?q=Health+policy+research+in+Canada&hl=en&as_sdt=0&as_vis=1&oi=scholar)

Institute for Mental Health Policy Research - <https://www.camh.ca/en/science-and-research/institutes-and-centres/institute-for-mental-health-policy-research>

Noodle - <https://www.noodle.com/articles/how-to-become-a-health-policy-analyst>

Public Health Association of BC (PHABC) - <https://phabc.org/>

UBC SSPH Health Services and Policy division- <https://www.spph.ubc.ca/about/health-services-and-policy-2/>

WorkBC - <https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers/Browse-Career-Profile/4165#about-this-job>

## JOB BOARDS

Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) - <https://www.cpha.ca/job-board>

Indeed (Health Policy) -

<https://ca.indeed.com/jobs?q=Health+Policy+Researcher&l=Vancouver%2C+BC>

Indeed (Medical Research) -

<https://ca.indeed.com/jobs?q=Canada+Medical+Research&l=Vancouver%2C+BC>

Job Bank (Government of Canada) -

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/jobsearch/jobsearch?d=50&fn=4165&mid=39070&term=health+policy+researcher&sort=M&page=1#results-list-content>

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/health-policy-analyst-jobs/?originalSubdomain=ca>

UBC (SPPH) - <https://www.spph.ubc.ca/career-paths-and-alumni/career-opportunities/>

WorkBC - <https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers/Browse-Career-Profile/4165#about-this-job>

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Workopolis - <https://www.workopolis.com/jobsearch/find-jobs?ak=health+policy+research+analyst&l=Vancouver%2C+BC&job=pWePWrHCFjJts4V90nzcCcKnBsOcNP-RvqaJ0cQoQdv-3l1bZywA1Q>

WowJobs - <https://www.wowjobs.ca/jobs-health+policy+research+analyst-jobs?job=FbDP7Poal87i7XHuu1jI8RpsnC1hYjmuFeIYMSYWKwGvPfN7VbRRHQ>

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## LIST OF ASSOCIATIONS IN CANADA and INTERNATIONAL

### Canada

- [Accreditation Canada](#)
- [Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health](#)
- [Canadian Health Services Research Foundation \(CHSRF\)](#)
- [Canadian Institute for Health Information \(CIHI\)](#)
- [Canadian Institutes of Health Research \(CIHR\)](#)
- [Canadian Medical Association \(CMA\)](#)
- [Canadian Policy Research Networks \(CPRN\)](#)
- [Canadian Society for International Health](#)
- [Health Canada](#)
- [Health Care Opinions \(Longwoods Publishing\)](#)
- [Health Council of Canada](#)
- [Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences \(ICES\)](#)
- [Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada \(ISMP-Canada\)](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [The Canadian Medical Protective Association](#)
- [The Centre for Health Services and Policy Research \(CHSPR\)](#)
- [Safer Healthcare Now!](#)

### International

- [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(USA\)](#)
- [American Health Quality Association \(USA\)](#)
- [American Society for Quality \(USA\)](#)
- [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health \(AU\)](#)
- [The Cochrane Collaboration \(UK\)](#)
- [Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities \(USA\)](#)
- [Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement \(USA\)](#)
- [Institute for Healthcare Communication \(USA\)](#)
- [Institute for Healthcare Improvement \(USA\)](#)

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- [Institute for Safe Medication Practices \(USA\)](#)
- [International Society for Quality in Health Care \(IRE\)](#)
- [National Association for Healthcare Quality \(USA\)](#)
- [National Health Services \(Scotland\)](#)
- [National Health Services \(UK\)](#)
- [National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence \(UK\)](#)
- [National Institutes of Health \(USA\)](#)
- [National Patient Safety Foundation \(USA\)](#)
- [NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement \(UK\)](#)
- [The Commonwealth Fund \(USA\)](#)
- [The Joint Commission \(USA\)](#)
- [The Leapfrog Group \(USA\)](#)
- [VA National Centre for Patient Safety \(USA\)](#)

### **Quality and Safety Organizations**

- [BC Patient Safety & Quality Council](#)
- [Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety](#)
- [Health Quality Ontario](#)
- [Saskatchewan Health Quality Council](#)
- [Canadian Foundation for Innovation \(CFI\)](#)
- [Canadian Patient Safety Institute \(CPSI\)](#)