



# Director of Health and Inequalities

Brief for applicants

March 2026

# Welcome

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Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining us as Director of Health and Inequalities.

As an independent endowed charitable Foundation committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK, we shine a light on what needs to be done to improve health and care for the UK population. We inform policy at a national level, we give grants to support those working at the front line to innovate and improve care, and we fund initiatives to improve the health of local populations. Our aspiration is to fund practical changes and use what we know works on the ground to inform effective policymaking and enable wider systemic change for the better. By sharing what we learn, collaborating with others and building people's skills and knowledge, we aim to make a difference and build a healthier population.



In our 2023 to 2025 strategy, we have three strategic priorities: improving people's health and reducing health inequalities; providing evidence and analysis to improve health and care policy; and supporting radical innovation and improvement in health and care services. Our new 5-year strategy will be published in April and will focus on two areas – health and inequalities and health and care services. The Foundation benefits from an endowment of more than £1.2bn which enables us to spend around £50m a year on our work.

Within this context, our Director of Health and Inequalities leads one of the twin 'pillars' to our Strategy 2030. In the role, you will be responsible for shaping the portfolio for our health and inequalities work, setting priorities, delivering our business plan commitments and ensuring our work is always carried out to the highest possible standards. This is a high-profile expert role at the heart of our mission. You will work integrally with directors across the Foundation, leading, managing and supporting the development of our organisation. You will contribute to corporate initiatives and attend the Foundation's Board, Executive Committee and sub-committees as necessary.

We are seeking an accomplished, highly credible professional with a strong personal profile, reputation as a thought leader and a track record of leading and managing significant programmes of work in the pursuit of impact and change. The ideal candidate will combine their strategic insight into health, technical expertise and real world experience, and role model the professionalism and commitment to our mission, purpose and strategy expected of the team.

This is a particularly rewarding time to join us, as we embark on the next phase of our development. With the NHS and social care system under pressure to meet need, improvements in life expectancy stalling and health inequalities holding back potential, the need for our work has never been greater. Your contribution can truly help shape the future of health and care across the nation and I very much look forward to hearing from you.

**Dame Jennifer Dixon**  
**Chief Executive**

## About us

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We are an independent charitable organisation committed to building a healthier UK. We currently employ over 250 people, with offices in Blackfriars, Central London.

Health is our most precious asset. Good health enables us to live happy, fulfilling lives and to achieve our potential. It fuels our prosperity – a healthy and productive labour force is the engine that powers our economy. And it helps to build a stronger society by enabling us to play a full part in family life, make social connections and contribute to our communities. Yet good health remains out of the reach of too many people in the UK.

Our aim is to build a healthier UK. We do this by influencing policy and enabling systemic change as well as funding practical programmes on the ground. Our main routes to impact are:

- We analyse and understand the issues facing health and care now and in the future. We use this understanding to identify, develop and demonstrate solutions to these issues.
- We use our knowledge of the issues and potential solutions in order to influence policy and practice.
- Because we know that no single organisation can achieve our mission alone, we build individual, organisational and sector capability to support us in this work.

We have a strong reputation for producing high quality analysis, enjoy a high national profile and work closely with a wide range of stakeholders at a national level and in the health and care system.

In the UK, the population's health is fraying with more people living longer with major illness and deep inequalities in health between different parts of the country. At the same time health and care systems across the world are facing huge challenges with ageing populations, increasing demand for services and chronic labour shortages. The NHS is under unprecedented pressure with many people struggling to get the care they need, and the adult social care system is severely challenged.

We address these challenges by working on three strategic priorities:

- Improving people's health and reducing health inequalities
- Providing evidence and analysis to improve health and care policy
- Supporting radical innovation and improvement in health and care services

Cutting across all our work are our commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), increasing public participation in our work and achieving net zero by reducing our carbon footprint and becoming carbon neutral in our investments by 2035.

### Read more

Our strategy for 2023 – 2025 is available [here](#). Our new 5-year strategy will be published in April 2026; please [follow this link](#) for an early preview from Dr Jennifer Dixon DBE.

Please [click here](#) to read our latest annual report and financial statements.

You can also read about how we are governed [at this link](#).

## About this appointment

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The Director of Health and Inequalities is a member of the senior executive team with corporate responsibilities as well as leading a major pillar of our strategy on improving the health of the UK population and reducing inequalities. The postholder will work effectively with the chief executive, director executive team and wider senior leadership in helping to shape our strategic direction and improve the management and leadership of the organisation.

The successful applicant will take an organisational leadership role – working with directors across the Foundation to support the development of the organisation, contributing to corporate initiatives and governance as necessary and attending the Foundation’s Board, Executive Committee, and executive sub-committees as necessary to support the role.

The postholder will lead all work on health and inequalities – one of the twin ‘pillars’ to our external facing Strategy 2030. The other ‘pillar’ in Strategy 2030 is focused on healthcare and social care. The Director of Health and Inequalities will have responsibility to shape the portfolio for our health work, set priorities, deliver the business plan commitments and ensure work is carried out to the highest possible standards. In doing so the postholder will have responsibility for the management and development of the health and inequalities directorate and collaborate effectively with other teams across the Foundation.

The postholder will be responsible for managing and developing staff in the Directorate to ensure high standards of work and flourishing teams able to contribute their best both to our health work and to the wider organisation.

We are seeking an accomplished, known professional with a reputation as a thought leader and a strong track record of managing a significant range of work on health in the pursuit of impact and change. The ideal candidate will combine strategic insight, technical expertise, and real-world experience, as well as role modelling high-quality professionalism and a commitment to the Health Foundation’s mission, purpose and strategy.



## Role description

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**Role title** Director of Health and Inequalities

**Reporting to** Chief Executive

- Work with the Chief Executive, executive team and wider senior leadership in contributing to the leadership and management of the organisation, helping to shape our strategic direction and deliver our strategic plan effectively.
- Review, refine and reprioritise the portfolio of programmes and individual projects within the Directorate and Foundation-wide to address the challenges and evolution of the external environment. This includes the delivery of real-world impact.
- Develop effective approaches, partnerships and programmes in support of delivery against new priorities. This includes managing structural changes and adjustments to the portfolio, working with cross-Foundation teams as plans evolve and change.
- Lead on strategic corporate projects as required and deliver in alignment with the Foundation's common leadership objectives related to people management (including values, behaviours and inclusion); financial management and risk management.
- Co-chair the Strategy Committee, be a de facto member of the Portfolio Committee and contribute to regular corporate activities and initiatives such as staff meetings, Foundation-wide leadership and development programmes and other corporate projects as necessary.
- Lead the design, development and management of an effective, high-quality and innovative portfolio of activities on health and inequalities, to deliver real world impact.
- Develop an impactful external profile for our work in health and inequalities and act as a credible spokesperson for the Foundation.
- Build approaches to understanding complex problems and design solutions to them through a model of structured commissions, facilitating active conversations with external and internal experts to define strategies with a focus on drivers of health and the wider public health environment.
- Develop effective relationships with senior stakeholders and influencers across the health and inequalities landscape to inform, drive and support the Foundation's strategic focus and priorities.
- Manage and develop staff in the Directorate to ensure high standards and achieve a flourishing team that contributes to our health work and more widely.
- Work in partnership with other directors and their teams to design and deliver projects and programmes that support the needs of the Health and Inequalities area of work and are delivered in alignment with the Foundation's priorities.
- Work in partnership with corporate services teams to design funding programmes that support the needs of the Health and Inequalities area of work and are delivered in alignment with the Foundation's priorities and regulatory and legal guidance.

All our senior leaders additionally contribute to the following:

- Financial management – deliver your portfolio of work in alignment with the allocated budget and corporate approach.
- People management – effectively manage your teams in alignment with the Foundation's values and behaviours. Promoting active compliance in line with the Foundation's performance management processes.
- Programme management – deliver your allocated programmes of work in alignment with the Foundation's programme management principles, ensuring deadlines are met, to quality standards and within budget, identifying and managing risks as appropriate.
- EDI – actively support, promote and take responsibility for the delivery of the Foundation's EDI strategy and action plan. Identifying how corporate EDI objectives can be supported and delivered within your teams.
- Change – plays an active role in supporting key aspects of the Foundation's ongoing organisational change agenda.

## Our commitment to Inclusion and Diversity

We are committed to an inclusive hiring process, where every candidate has the chance to showcase their unique skills and experience in an accessible, and supported environment, to ensure that we can make the best appointment for each job on merit. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and encourage those from underrepresented groups in this field to apply to us.

We want to achieve a better balance across our organisation including increasing the representation of women in senior roles, and black and ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities across the Foundation. As part of this commitment, we particularly welcome interest from these groups.



# Person specification

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Please respond briefly and directly to Part One in your written application. Parts Two and Three will be explored at interview stage with selected applicants.

## Part One

### Knowledge and experience

- Educated to degree or higher degree level (ideally in a public health-related discipline)
- Extensive understanding of the national policy making process on health and related areas of public policy.
- Track record of working with leaders to bring about practical change in public policy from a non-statutory position.
- Track record of writing, publishing, speaking and presenting using objective evidence and engaging a range of perspectives.
- Significant experience of providing effective vision and innovative strategic direction to teams, underpinned by organisational experience gained at senior management and levels.
- Experience of developing, managing and leading teams for high performance and continuous improvement.
- Thorough understanding of, and commitment to, equal opportunities and diversity.
- Experience in managing, supporting and delivering organisational change.
- Experience of managing within the charity or Foundation or think tank setting. Knowledge of the UK charity landscape and relevant regulatory environment is desirable but not essential.

## Part Two

### Skills and abilities

- Ability to act as a trusted and reliable member of the Foundation's Director team, contributing to the overall management of the Foundation, and to develop and exemplify the values of the Foundation.
- Highly effective communications skills in writing, public speaking and presentation, including with the media; this will include the handling skills to communicate objective evidence-based quantitative analysis and argument credibly in the media.
- The research skills to enable incisive constructive critique of analysis.
- Highly effective people skills to lead and motivate diverse high-performing teams.
- Ability to work collaboratively with the CEO, other directors and senior staff to develop the Foundation's strategic direction and ensure translation into operational plans.
- Ability to represent the Foundation effectively, internally and externally.

## Part Three

### Leadership style and behaviours

- You will bring your personal reputation and network of strong relationships with leading figures across national and local public bodies, the academic community and the voluntary sector.
- Scrupulous conscientiousness and attention to detail.
- Commitment to improving quality and reducing the risks of errors in analysis or argument.
- Clear commitment to the organisation's purpose and delivery of the strategy
- Sound judgement.
- Strong integrity.
- Deep personal commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.

# Terms of appointment

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## Remuneration

The salary for this role is circa £150,000 per annum. The role is offered on a full-time, permanent basis.

## Location

The postholder will be based at the Health Foundation offices at 8 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8AP. Within this role, you are required to work in person at our offices for a minimum of two days per week.

## Commitment to Inclusion and Diversity

We are committed to an inclusive hiring process, where every candidate has the chance to showcase their unique skills and experience in an accessible, and supported environment, to ensure that we can make the best appointment for each job on merit.

We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and encourage those from underrepresented groups in this field to apply to us. We want to achieve a better balance across our organisation including increasing the representation of women in senior roles, and black and ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities across the Foundation. As part of this commitment, we particularly welcome interest from these groups.

## Right to work

Candidates must have the right to work in the UK at the time of appointment.

## Pension

The Foundation will match and double employee pension contributions up to a maximum employer contribution of 10%.

## Annual leave

30 days holiday a year, plus statutory holidays, pro rata for part time staff.

## Additional benefits

Generous benefits which include:

- Enhanced occupational sick pay scheme
- Income protection scheme following 26 weeks of continuous sickness, or disability
- Death in service benefit of six times annual salary
- Enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption policy
- Funding for job-related development plus corporate learning and development opportunities.

## How to apply

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To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/thf-dir-health-inequalities/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out briefly your experience against the criteria in Part One of the Person Specification (no more than two sides).
- Please tell us how you became aware of this opportunity.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Deadline for applications is **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

### Recruitment timetable

**Closing date:** Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026

**Preliminary interviews:** Early May 2026

**Final Panel interviews:** Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2026

