

Social enterprises

This page will offer you key information about working for a social enterprise and where you can find out more.

Social enterprises are part of the Government's aim to shift power from central to local control and encourage people and organisations to play a more active part in their local communities.

social enterprise - male

Social enterprises are businesses that trade to tackle social problems, improve communities, people's life chances, or the environment

What are social enterprises?

Social enterprises are businesses that trade to tackle social problems, improve communities, people's life chances, or the environment. They can range in size from small community-owned village shops to large organisations delivering public services.

There are many social enterprises in the UK including well known examples such as Turning Point, the Eden Project, the Big Issue, and Jamie Oliver's Fifteen restaurant.

Why work for a social enterprise?

If you're considering working for a social enterprise, you should think about:

- who are the existing or likely clients and customers for the social enterprise's service?
- how will terms and conditions of employment work? (eg working hours, pay, annual leave entitlement, flexi-working arrangements)
- how might pension arrangements be affected?
- what will be the opportunities for training and development?

It may be possible for NHS staff transferring to a social enterprise to maintain their existing terms and conditions of employment (known as TUPE). Social enterprises may also be able to

continue to access the NHS Pension Scheme for existing members.

• **Background info on social enterprises**

Social enterprises have arisen from a wide range of organisational backgrounds, including:

- trading charities
- community groups and co-operatives
- individuals or groups of individuals
- the public sector
- new start-up organisations
- housing associations

Key factors about social enterprises include:

- they are businesses directly involved in producing goods or providing services for social and environmental purposes
- they generate the majority, if not all, of their income through trading goods or services
- they have specific social aims and are accountable to the wider community for their social, environmental and economic impact
- surpluses and profits are usually reinvested in the business or in the community rather than going to shareholders
- they can arise from the public, private or voluntary sector

• **Examples of social enterprises**

- Your Healthcare ^[1] (NHS Kingston's provider services arm which became a social enterprise in 2010)
- Sunlight Development Trust ^[2] (uses community development to tackle long standing health and social inequalities)
- Principia ^[3] (set up in 2006 to design and provide health services for the community of Rushcliffe, Nottinghamshire)
- Neighbourhood Midwives ^[4] (a social enterprise conceived and developed by midwives)
- Central Surrey Health ^[5] (provides community nursing and therapy services to the people of central Surrey)
- Social enterprise in action ^[6] (case studies of social enterprise projects set up under the 'right to request' scheme, which is aimed at enabling NHS staff to take the lead in setting up health social enterprises)

• **State of Social Enterprise survey**

The 2015 State of Social Enterprise Survey shows social enterprises are outperforming regular businesses on growth and impact. [Read the survey in full.](#) [7]

• Further information

You can find out more by visiting:

- [Pioneers' Post](#) [8] (a monthly magazine and online service for people involved with social enterprises)
- [The Social Enterprise — Yorkshire and the Humber website for Case Studies](#) [9]
- [Setting up a Social Enterprise](#) [10] (information from Gov.uk)
- [Social enterprise UK](#) [11]
- [Social enterprise jargon buster](#) [12]

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/where-will-you-work/third-sector/social-enterprises>

Links

[1] <http://www.yourhealthcare.org/> [2] <http://www.sunlighttrust.org.uk/> [3] <http://www.rushcliffeccg.nhs.uk/about-us/principia-partners-in-health> [4] <http://www.neighbourhoodmidwives.org.uk/about-midwives.php> [5] <http://www.cshsurrey.co.uk/> [6] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-enterprise-in-action-right-to-request-projects> [7] <http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/news/state-social-enterprise-survey-shows-social-enterprises-are-outperforming-regular-businesses-growth-and-impact> [8] <http://www.pioneerspost.com/> [9] <http://www.seyh.org.uk/case-studies> [10] <https://www.gov.uk/set-up-a-social-enterprise> [11] <http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/> [12] <http://www.socialenterpriselive.com/resources/jargon>