

## Working life (GIM)

This page provides useful information about the roles and responsibilities of doctors in general internal medicine, where they work, who they work with and what they feel about their role.

“Being medical registrar on-call can be great fun, although tiring, and sometimes stressful. It tests your knowledge and clinical skills. Time management skills are essential and leadership skills rapidly develop. Looking back at a busy shift is incredibly rewarding.” - **Medical registrar**

### How your time is spent

GIM is mainly a hospital inpatient specialty, with some outpatient work in rapid access clinics and for patient follow-up. Work is typically based on an [acute medical unit](#) <sup>[1]</sup> (AMU), medical admissions unit (MAU) or on the medical wards.

A large part of the working day involves reviewing newly admitted patients, continuing treatment of the most unwell patients, or providing care for patients who have developed an acute illness whilst admitted for another reason such as a surgical operation. Outpatients may be referred with chest pain or other urgent symptoms.

Teaching and training plays a prominent role and there are opportunities for research and other academic work.

### [On call](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and working hours

The EU [Working Time Directive](#) <sup>[3]</sup> limits the working week to 48 hours. Some out-of-hours work is required when there are sick patients requiring attention, but this is compensated for by appropriate time off. Over 70% of consultants say they are routinely on-call at weekends.

- **Who you will work with?**

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Doctors in general internal medicine work alongside:

- trainee medical staff
- nursing <sup>[4]</sup> staff
- medical secretaries <sup>[5]</sup> and administrative staff <sup>[6]</sup>

They also work closely with:

- physiotherapists <sup>[7]</sup>
- social services <sup>[8]</sup> staff
- occupational therapists <sup>[9]</sup>
- other allied medical professionals

## Attractions and challenges of the role

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One of the attractions of general internal medicine is that specialists see a wide spectrum of clinical problems.

Treating acutely ill people and sometimes saving lives can be rewarding but it can also be challenging to manage acutely ill people under pressure.

Working with a multidisciplinary team can be an enjoyable aspect of this specialty.

This specialty also provides a wide range of opportunities for career choice and progression.

## **Links**

[1] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Acute\\_medical\\_unit](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Acute_medical_unit)

[2] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#On\\_call](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#On_call)

[3] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Working\\_Time\\_Directive](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Working_Time_Directive)

[4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing>

[5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/administration/medical-secretary-personal-assistant>

[6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/administration>

[7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/physiotherapist>

[8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/social-worker>

[9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/occupational-therapist>