

Working life (medical oncology)

This page provides useful information about the roles and responsibilities of medical oncologists, where they work, who they work with and what they feel about their role.

“Medical [oncology](#) [1] promotes awareness of the principles of good cancer care.”
Medical [oncology](#) [1] consultant.

Most medical oncologists are based in a cancer centre, and most cancer patients receive their care in outpatient settings, such as clinics and day care wards.

Consultants will carry out a number of outpatient clinics every week seeing new and follow-up patients. Most outpatient clinics will necessitate two hours of direct clinical care administration for the organisation and prescription of patient treatment.

Medical oncologists also participate in inpatient ward rounds and multidisciplinary team meetings. They also support:

- teaching and training
- audit and clinical governance
- continuing professional development
- research participation in National Cancer Research Network (NCRN) trials
- translational research in academic centres

Just under 40% of consultants say they are routinely [on call](#) [2] at weekends.

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**Who you will
work with?**

**Expand /
collapse**

Medical oncologists work alongside:

- clinical oncologists (specialising in [radiotherapy](#) [3] treatments)
- clinical nurse specialists

- medical secretaries and administrative staff

They also work closely with:

- surgical oncologists
- radiologists
- haematologists
- histopathologists
- research practitioners
- other professions allied to medicine (PAMs)

They may also work with other specialists such as paediatricians.

**Attractions and
challenges of
the role**

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collapse**

Working successfully with other specialists to improve the quality of life of patients is one of the attractions and challenges of the role. Advances in cancer care such as new drug therapies and cancer genome research also make this a professionally rewarding field of medicine.

Helping patients and their families through a very challenging time is rewarding, but while cancer survival rates continue to improve overall, the deaths of patients can be difficult to handle.

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/medicine/medical-oncology/working-life>

Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Oncology>

[2] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#On_call

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Radiotherapy>