Podiatry assistant

Podiatry assistants treat and care for people’s feet and legs under the supervision of a registered podiatrist.

This page has information on the role of the podiatry assistant, including entry requirements and skills needed.

Working life

Podiatry assistants are also known as footcare assistants. You'll treat people of all ages and situations, for example:

- children with lower limb pain or problems walking
- diabetes sufferers with circulation problems who may be at risk of amputation
- elderly people
- people with sports injuries
- dancers whose long hours of rehearsing and performing put stress on their feet causing injury
- people needing minor procedures such as nail surgery or laser treatment, using local anaesthetic
- people wanting advice about footwear or foot health
As a podiatry assistant, your work will include

- cutting, filing and drilling toenails
- applying dressings and treatments
- booking appointments and other admin work
- taking insole templates
- advising patients and their carers on foot health and footwear

Where will I work?

In the NHS, you will work in hospital departments, clinics, health centres or GPs surgeries. Some podiatry assistants visit clients who cannot leave home or are in a nursing home.

Some podiatry assistants work in private clinics or footcare centres.

Entry requirements
There are no set entry requirements to become a podiatry assistant. Employers expect good literacy and numeracy and may ask for GCSEs, or equivalent. They may ask for an NVQ, BTEC or equivalent qualification in health and social care or healthcare.

Employers often ask for relevant work experience. Even where this is not specified, it would be an advantage if you have worked in health or social care, either in paid employment or voluntary work.

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**Personal characteristics and skills needed**

Podiatry assistants need to be

- willing to handle other people’s feet
- calm and reassuring
- caring and dedicated
- able to follow procedures and instructions
- willing to work alone or in a team
- able to explain treatment to patients

You’ll also need

- good manual (hand) skills
- organisation skills
- communication skills
- customer service skills

**Training and development**

You will get the training you need to work as a podiatry assistant. This includes:

- diseases and conditions of the skin and nails
- anatomy and physiology
- conditions of the feet and legs
- nail operations

Some podiatry assistants join the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists as associate members. The Society runs courses, conferences and seminars where podiatry assistants can update their skills and network with others doing similar work.

- Pay and conditions
Podiatry assistants working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. You would typically start on AfC band 2. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at bands 3 and above.

Most podiatry assistants in the NHS work standard hours, which are likely to be around 37.5 a week. They may work some evenings.

Outside the NHS, podiatry assistants’ hours of work depend on client needs. They may work evenings and weekends to suit private clients.

- Where the role can lead

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  You could apply to train as a podiatrist [5].

- Job market and vacancies

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  Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [6] and some advertise on their own websites. You can find a list of NHS organisations on NHS Choices [7].

  If you're applying for a role either directly in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services, you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work.

  Find out more about NHS values [8].

- Further information

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  - Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists [2]
  - Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists (careers website) [9]

Other roles that may interest you

- Orthotic technician [10]
- Podiatrist [11]
- Experienced paramedic [12]
- Emergency care assistant [13]

Source URL: https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/podiatry-assistant

Links
[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Physiology