

Podiatry assistant

Podiatry assistants treat and care for people whose feet and legs have been affected by injury or illness. Their work helps people live full and independent lives.

Working life

Podiatry assistants are sometimes known as footcare assistants and treat people of all ages with a variety of conditions. 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

podiatry assistant with patient

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.

Apprenticeships logo

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.

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

Podiatry assistants are also known as footcare assistants.

- 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 ^[1]
- conditions of the feet and legs
- nail operations

You may also have the opportunity to do an apprenticeship.

Some podiatry assistants join the Royal College of Podiatry ^[2] as associate members. They runs courses, conferences and seminars where podiatry assistants can update their skills and network with others doing similar work. You could apply to train as a podiatrist.

Pay and benefits

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours and may include a mix of shifts, such as nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. You'll be paid on the Agenda for Change (AFC ^[3]) pay system, typically starting on band 2 or 3.

You'll also have access to our generous pension scheme and health service discounts, as well as 27 days of annual leave, plus bank holidays, which increases the longer you're in service.

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Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Physiology> [2] <https://rcpod.org.uk/> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-support-worker/roles-healthcare-support-worker/orthotic-technician> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/podiatrist> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/experienced-paramedic> [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/emergency-care-assistant>