

FAQs about careers in the psychological professions

This page has some frequently asked questions about careers in the psychological professions.

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What careers are there in the psychological therapies?

There are lots of career options to choose from in the psychological professions. Different areas of expertise are needed in different counselling and psychotherapist roles, or you could work as a CBT therapist, in one of the psychologist roles or in a practitioner role supporting children and young people. If you have lived experience of mental health challenges, being a [peer support worker](#) ^[1] could be right for you. [See what you could do](#) ^[2].

How and where can I train to be a psychotherapist?

Most staff in the NHS that provide psychotherapy are clinically qualified healthcare professionals, such as [psychiatrists](#) ^[3], [clinical psychologists](#) ^[4], [social workers](#) ^[5] or [art](#) ^[6], [music](#) ^[7] or [dramatherapists](#) ^[8] who have undergone appropriate training.

Find out more about training to be an [adult psychotherapist](#) ^[9], [child and adolescent psychotherapist](#) ^[10] or [family and systemic psychotherapist](#) ^[11].

Is there NHS funding for postgraduate psychology training?

The NHS employs [clinical](#) [4], [counselling](#) [12], [forensic](#) [13] and [health](#) [14] psychologists. The training and financial support is different for each. The NHS usually supports a number of students on approved postgraduate clinical psychology courses, whereas students on other courses usually self-fund. However, it is always worth checking with employers and course providers directly.

The NHS offers a limited number of child psychotherapy training posts which are offered by a small number of NHS trusts, or as a partnership between an NHS trust and one of the training providers. These posts provide varying levels of financial support for trainees, in exchange for clinical practice, usually undertaken at an NHS site. Further information on NHS training posts and grants, is available directly from NHS trusts or from the individual training organisations.

[Find out more about training in the psychological professions](#) [15].

What is the NHS Talking Therapies service (previously Improving Access to Psychological Therapies - IAPT) and what sort of careers are there in this field?

NHS Talking Therapies provide greater public access to the talking therapies. Specifically, within this service there are opportunities to train as [psychological wellbeing practitioners](#) [16] and [high intensity therapists](#) [17].

[Find out more about NHS Talking Therapies](#) [18]

However, if you like the idea of using the talking therapies, you might also want to look at opportunities for working as a [counsellor](#) [19], [psychotherapist](#) [20], [psychiatrist](#) [3], [clinical psychologist](#) [4], [social worker](#) [5], [mental health nurse](#) [21], or [occupational therapist](#) [22].

My degree isn't in psychology, Can I still become a clinical, counselling, health or forensic psychologist?

If your degree isn't in psychology, you can study for an approved conversion course which will give you eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the British Psychological Society (BPS). This membership then allows you to apply for postgraduate courses in clinical, counselling, health or forensic psychology

How do I train to work as a counsellor in the NHS?

See our pages on the role of [counsellor](#) [23] and [counselling psychologist](#) [24] for more information about how to train.

The NHS also employs staff in a broad range of roles using the talking therapies, including [psychological wellbeing practitioner](#) [16], [CBT therapist](#) [25], [psychiatrist](#) [3], [clinical psychologist](#) [4] and others. See our [role pages](#) [2] for details.

Where can I get training in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)?

See our [CBT therapist](#) [25] information for all you need to know about training and working in this field.

Can I work as an assistant in the psychological professions?

Yes, it is possible to work as an [assistant psychologist](#) [26]. You might also be interested in becoming a clinical associate in psychology. See the information on our [clinical psychologist](#) [27] page.

Where can I find more information about a career in the psychological professions?

Take a look at our role pages to find out more about working in the [psychological professions](#) [2]. There's lots to choose from!

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/faqs-psychological-therapies>

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