

General practitioner

General practitioners (GPs) treat all common medical conditions and refer patients to hospitals and other medical services for urgent and specialist treatment.

You'll have an important role looking after patients in your community.

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Life as a GP

You'll be part of a wider team that promotes, prevents and offers treatment. You'll care for people with chronic illness and long-term conditions, aiming to keep them well and in their own homes.

A full-time working week usually comprises of eight sessions, which equates to four days. A typical day in the practice normally starts at around 8am when you'll check paperwork before seeing patients. You'll spend time with a mix of patients with a variety of health needs until late morning, either face-to-face or through a phone consultation. At the end of morning surgery, some GPs see extra patients who need to be seen urgently.

After morning appointments, you'll generally catch up on paperwork, and make any phone calls. After lunch you may visit patients in their homes or care homes. Once visits are complete, you'll start your afternoon surgery, which might run from 3pm until 5.30pm. You may also provide evening and weekend appointments.

Dr Chris Pearce

GP

Each patient experiences conditions slightly differently which means that the work is never boring. There is also a detective element that I enjoy - you may have to look beneath the presenting symptoms to find out what the patient is really saying.

[Read Chris's story](#) ^[3]

How much can I earn?

GPs employed by the NHS receive a salary of between £68,975 to £104,085.

Many other GPs are responsible for running their own practices either alone or in partnership with other GPs. This means they have the freedom to decide how much to pay themselves and their employees, including any GPs they employ.

How about the benefits?

- make a difference
- flexible and part-time working
- high income early in your career
- work anywhere in the world
- excellent pension scheme
- good holiday entitlement
- NHS discounts in shops and restaurants

Must-have skills

- communication skills
- an interest in working with people
- the ability to work as part of a large team
- the willingness and ability to handle uncertainty and conflicting demands
- the ability to stay calm while working under pressure
- excellent organisational and time-management skills
- a willingness to develop entrepreneurial and business skills
- good IT skills
- the ability to manage change

Entry requirements

Your first step is medical school. Typically, you'll need excellent GCSEs and three A or A* passes at A level including chemistry for a five-year undergraduate degree in medicine. Many medical schools also ask for biology and others may require maths or physics.

If you already have a degree, you could study for a four-year postgraduate degree in medicine.

You'll need to pass an interview and admissions test. You'll be asked to show how you demonstrate the NHS values such as compassion and respect.

Some medical schools look to recruit a mix of students from different backgrounds and geographical areas, so your educational and economic background and family circumstances

could be considered as part of your application.

How to become a GP

After medical school, you'll join the paid two-year foundation programme ^[4] where you'll work in six placements in different settings.

After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid specialty training ^[5] to become a GP which will take a minimum of three years.

You may be able to train part time, for example for health reasons or if you have family or caring responsibilities.

Where a career as a GP can take you

You could:

- specialise in areas such as sports medicine, adolescent health, diabetes or palliative medicine
- get involved in research at universities, the NHS or the private sector
- teach medical students or postgraduate doctors in training

• Find a degree in medicine

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- Region
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- Admissions address
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Allam Medical Building
University of Hull
Hull
HU6 7RX

Medicine with a gateway year

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Medicine

The University of Edinburgh

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- Region
 - Scotland
- Admissions address
 - Room SU219, 2nd Floor
 - The Chancellor's Building
 - Edinburgh BioQuarter
 - 49 Little France Crescent
 - Edinburgh
 - EH16 4SB

Medicine - gateway to medicine

University of Dundee

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 - Full-time
- Duration of the course
 - 6 years
- Leading to a career in
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- Contact details
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 - +44 (0) 1382 383838
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 - Scotland
- Admissions address
 - University of Dundee
 - Nethergate
 - Dundee
 - Scotland, UK
 - DD1 4HN

Medicine

University of Dundee

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- Qualification
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- Study mode
 - Full-time
- Duration of the course
 - 5 years
- Leading to a career in
 - Medicine
- Contact details

contactus@dundee.ac.uk ^[12]

+44 (0) 1382 383838

- Region
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• Further information

The [Royal College of GPs](#) ^[15] has further information about being a GP, particularly as your career progresses. Take a look.

Other roles that may interest you

- [General practice nurse](#) ^[16]
- [Practice manager](#) ^[17]
- [Pharmacist](#) ^[18]
- [General psychiatry](#) ^[19]

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