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Renal technology

Renal technology is used in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with kidney disease.

In this area of healthcare science, you will ensure equipment is working properly and train staff and patients to use it correctly.

You'll be part of a team that includes doctors specialising in renal medicine, specialist nurses, pharmacists, social workers and dietitians.

Role overview

The diagnosis and treatment of kidney disease is known as nephrology.

Patients whose kidneys are badly diseased or damaged, will usually require a kidney transplant or regular treatment with dialysis in order to stay alive. Dialysis is a process that filters your blood to rid your body of harmful waste, extra salt, and water.

Complex equipment is used in dialysis, and replaces some of the functions that the kidneys would usually do for themselves, such as blood purification, fluid removal and restoring the balance of electrolytes in the blood.

Working life

As a healthcare science practitioner in renal technology, you'll be:

- responsible for ensuring that equipment used in renal dialysis is properly maintained
- making sure that equipment works effectively and efficiently
- managing and quality assuring the specialist water treatment plants and distribution systems that dialysis equipment uses
- training staff and patients how to use renal equipment

Who will I work with?

In this area of healthcare science, you'd work in hospitals and patients' homes and be part of a team that includes doctors specialising in renal medicine [1], specialist nurses [2], pharmacists [3], social workers [4] and dietitians [5], for example.

Want to learn more?

- Find out more about the entry requirements, skills and interests required to enter a career in renal technology [6]
- Find out more about the training you'll receive for a career in renal technology [7]

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Pay and conditions

Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) [8] pay scales. This pay system covers all staff except doctors, dentists and the most senior managers. As a healthcare science practitioner, you'd usually start on band 5, with opportunities to progress to more senior positions. Trainee clinical scientists train at band 6 level, and qualified clinical scientists are generally appointed at band 7. With experience and further qualifications, you could apply for posts up to band 9.

Staff will usually work a standard 37.5 hours per week. They may work a shift pattern.

Terms and conditions of service can vary for employers outside the NHS.

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Where the role can lead

With further training or experience or both, you may be able to develop your career further and apply for vacancies in areas such as further specialisation, management, research, or teaching.

Healthcare science staff often work at the forefront of research and innovation, so that patients are continually receiving the very best healthcare. For example, in renal technology, you could be involved in the development of new ways of measuring physiological processes and enhancing quality assurance [9] procedures.

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Job market and vacancies

Finding and applying for jobs

When you're looking for job or apprenticeship vacancies, there are a number of sources you can use, depending on the type of work you're seeking.

Check vacancies carefully to be sure you can meet the requirements of the person specification before applying and to find out what the application process is. You may need to apply online or send a CV for example.

Key sources relevant to vacancies in the health sector:

- vacancies in organisations delivering NHS healthcare can be found on the NHS Jobs website [10]
- opportunities in the Civil Service can be found on the Civil Service Jobs website [11]
- vacancies in local government can be found on the Local Government Jobs website [12] and the Jobs Go Public website [13]

As well as these sources, you may find suitable vacancies in the health sector by contacting local employers directly, searching in local newspapers and by using the Universal Jobmatch tool [14].

Find out more about applications and interviews [15].

Volunteering is an excellent way of gaining experience (especially if you don't have enough for a specific paid job you're interested in) and also seeing whether you're suited to a particular type of work. It's also a great way to boost your confidence and you can give something back to the community.

Find out more about volunteering and gaining experience [16].

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Further information

For further information about a career in renal technology, please contact:

- Academy for Healthcare Science [17]
- Association of Renal Technologists [18]
- Health and Care Professions Council [19]
- Institution of Physics and Engineering in Medicine [20]
- National School of Healthcare Science [21]
- The Renal Association [22]
- UCAS [23]

Other roles that may interest you

- Clinical measurement [24]
- Medical engineering [25]
- Clinical bioinformatics health informatics [26]
- Cellular sciences [27]

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Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/medicine/renal-medicine>
[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pharmacy/pharmacist> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/social-worker> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/dietitian>
[6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/physical-sciences-and-biomechanical-engineering/renal-technology/entry-requirements>

[7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/physical-sciences-and-biomechanical-engineering/renal-technology> [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates> [9] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Quality_assurance [10] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk> [11] <https://www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/csr/index.cgi> [12] <http://www.lgjobs.com/> [13] <http://www.jobsgopublic.com/> [14] <https://www.gov.uk/jobsearch> [15] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/planning-your-career/applications-and-interviews> [16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/gaining-experience> [17] <http://www.ahcs.ac.uk> [18] <http://www.renaltech.net/> [19] <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/> [20] <http://www.ipem.ac.uk/> [21] <http://www.nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/> [22] <http://www.renal.org> [23] <http://www.ucas.com> [24] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physical-sciences-and-biomedical-engineering/clinical-measurement> [25] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physical-sciences-and-biomedical-engineering/medical-engineering> [26] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/clinical-bioinformatics/clinical-bioinformatics-health-informatics> [27] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/life-sciences/cellular-sciences>