

Occupational health nurse

Occupational health nurses are leaders of public health and care in the workplace. They specialise in the care and well-being of people at work.

Occupational health nurses are qualified and registered nurses, many of whom have chosen to gain additional training and qualifications as specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN - OHN). Their additional training in public health enables them to assess the health needs of individuals, families and the wider community to promote good health and prevent illness.

To work as an occupational health nurse, you must be registered on part 1 of the Nursing and Midwifery Council ([NMC](#) ^[1]) register. You may also be a registered midwife and on part 2 of the register. Occupational health technicians do not need to be registered as nurses.



Working life

Occupational health nurses protect and promote the health of people at work. They have direct contact with employees and are often approached with health-related questions and problems. Employees often see their occupational health nurse as a 'first port of call' and seek advice on various matters, such as:

- a non-work-related condition
- where to get the best advice on a health issue or personal problem at home
- health and safety at work

Your role will include:

Employees often see their occupational health nurse as a 'first port of call'.

- identifying and preventing work-related health problems
- promoting healthy living and working conditions
- understanding the effects of work on health and of health on work
- providing advice on first aid management
- providing health screening services
- workforce and workplace monitoring and health needs assessments
- health promotion
- education and training
- counselling and support
- risk assessment and risk management
- travel health

You may also carry out certain clinical tasks such as health surveillance, giving vaccinations and taking blood samples.

You will work closely with employees' line managers, human resource staff, and health and safety advisers to support good health at work. You may lead or work in a team alongside other occupational health professionals, such as doctors, physiotherapists, counsellors, occupational psychologists, and mental health professionals.

Where will I work?

You'll usually be employed as an independent practitioner in an organisation or as part of an occupational health service team in an organisation's human resources department.

You could work in a variety of industries including health, education, law firms or airlines. You could be employed by a large organisation or company such as an NHS trust, local authority or major retail chain. Some occupational health nurses establish their own businesses.

Entry requirements

You will need to be a registered adult ^[2], child ^[3], learning disability ^[4] or mental health nurse ^[5] to apply for occupational health nursing posts. You may also choose to take an approved programme in Specialist Community Public Health Nursing - Occupational Health Nursing (SCPHN - OHN). The requirements for entry to SCPHN - OHN programmes are very flexible and no minimum period of post-registration work experience is required.

Applying for a job within a large occupational health service should help you gain adequate supervision and support. This is especially important for a first job in an occupational health.

To secure your first post in occupational health nursing, some knowledge or experience of the following would be helpful:

- working in accident and emergency nursing, practice nursing, or both
- public health, infection control
- counselling, psychological health
- learning about relevant legislation
- management of sickness absence
- development of manual handling policies and rehabilitation of staff with chronic conditions
- undertaking a role as an RCN safety representative

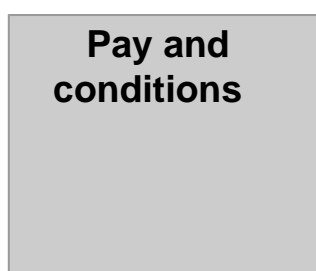
Want to learn more?

- Find out more about the training and development opportunities in occupational health nursing ^[6]

Want to come back?

If your SCPHN registration has lapsed then you may need to complete a return to practice programme. Email us ^[7] so that we can put you in touch with someone in your local area who can offer tailored advice.

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Pay and conditions of employment are likely to vary depending on the employer. For more information please visit our pay and benefits page ^[8].

Example salaries:

Occupational health nurse: £21,909 - £28,462pa (Truro, 2017)

Occupational health advisor: £35,000 - £39,000pa (Anglian Water Services Ltd, 2017)

Specialist nurse advisor occupational health: £31,878 - £42,046pa inc. HCAP (King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust)

- **Where the role
can lead**

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There are several routes for occupational health nurses to further their careers. These include opportunities in management ^[9] and public health management ^[10], education and research ^[11], including public health academia ^[12].

More information on training and development in occupational health nursing. ^[6]

Nursing careers resource

A careers resource has been jointly developed by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and Health Education England (HEE) to help registered nurses and the clinical support workforce plan their health careers effectively. It shows different ways that you can develop your career from a band 5 role with case studies, videos and next steps.

Visit the RCN/HEE careers resource for registered band 5 nurses ^[13]

- **Job market and**

vacancies

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Most NHS organisations advertise their job and apprenticeship vacancies on NHS Jobs ^[14], including those who run NHS services. Some advertise on their own websites. You can find a list of NHS organisations at NHS Choices. ^[15] Occupational health nursing posts outside the NHS will be advertised in the nursing press and recruitment websites.

Job vacancies

- Civil Service Job Search (Gov.UK) ^[16]
- Working for PHE ^[17]
- Universal Jobmatch (Gov.UK) ^[18]
- Local Government Jobs (UK) ^[19]
- Scottish Local Government Jobs ^[20]
- Local Government Jobs in Northern Ireland ^[21]
- Welsh Local Government Jobs ^[22]
- NHS Jobs ^[14]
- NHS Scotland Recruitment ^[23]
- NHS Education for Scotland ^[24]
- Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland ^[25]
- Public Health Wales (NHS) Recruitment and Employment ^[26]
- Public Sector Jobs in Wales ^[27]
- Royal Society for Public Health ^[28]

Recruiting for values

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 values of the NHS Constitution apply in your everyday work. The same will be true if you are applying for a university course funded by the NHS.

Find out more about NHS values ^[29]

If you're applying for a job in a local authority, each has its own set of core values underpinning its recruitment exercises, which can usually be found in the recruitment section of its website.

Job titles

Note that terms such as 'practitioner', 'manager', 'specialist' and 'consultant' may have different meanings in different job titles. Therefore, they do not necessarily reflect the role category that the job really belongs to. It is important to check the person specification of the role to fully understand the skills and knowledge required.

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- Royal College of Nursing [30]
- Nursing and Midwifery Council [31]
- The Association of Occupational Health Nurse Practitioners (UK) (AOHNP) [32]

Other roles that may interest you

- Health visitor [33]
- School nurse [34]
- Occupational medicine [35]
- Midwife [36]

Partner logos



Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/roles-public-health/occupational-health-nurse/occupational-health-nurse>

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NMC>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/adult-nurse>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/childrens-nurse>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/learning-disability-nurse>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/mental-health-nurse>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/occupational-health-nurse/training-and-development-occupational-health-nursing>
- [7] <mailto:returntopractice.wm@hee.nhs.uk?subject=SCPHN%20return%20to%20practice%20query>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/pay-and-benefits>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-manager>
- [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/public-health-manager>

- [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/clinical-academic-careers>
- [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/public-health-academic>
- [13] <https://www.rcn.org.uk/nursingcareersresource>
- [14] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>
- [15] <http://www.nhs.uk/service-search>
- [16] <https://www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/csr/index.cgi>
- [17] <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/about/recruitment>
- [18] <https://www.gov.uk/jobsearch>
- [19] <http://www.lgjobs.com/>
- [20] <https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk/home/>
- [21] <https://www.localgovernmentjobsni.gov.uk/>
- [22] <http://www.wlga.gov.uk/jobs>
- [23] <https://jobs.scot.nhs.uk/>
- [24] <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/recruitment.aspx>
- [25] <http://www.hscni.net/>
- [26] <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/46729>
- [27] <https://uk.jobted.com/?l=wales>
- [28] <http://www.rsph.org.uk/en/resources/jobs/>
- [29] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>
- [30] <http://www.rcn.org.uk/>
- [31] <http://www.nmc.org.uk/>
- [32] <http://www.aohnp.co.uk/>
- [33] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/roles-public-health/health-visitor/health-visitor>
- [34] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/roles-public-health/school-nurse/school-nurse>
- [35] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/occupational-medicine>
- [36] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/midwifery/roles-midwifery/midwife>
- [37] <https://www.rcn.org.uk/>