

# Physician associate

Physician associates support doctors in the diagnosis and management of patients.

As a physician associate, you might work in a GP surgery or be based in a hospital, but wherever you work, you'll have direct contact with patients.

You'll be trained to perform a number of tasks.

## Working life

You'll be a graduate who has undertaken [post-graduate training](#) <sup>[1]</sup> and you'll work under the supervision of a doctor. You'll be trained to perform a number of day-to-day tasks including:

- taking medical histories from patients
- performing physical examinations
- diagnosing illnesses
- seeing patients with long-term chronic conditions
- performing diagnostic and therapeutic procedures
- analysing test results
- developing management plans
- provide health promotion and disease prevention advice for patients.

Most physician associates currently work in general practice, acute (internal) medicine and emergency medicine.

*"I find it very rewarding when I've supported a patient with a mental illness and see them come out the other side feeling hopeful and stronger than they were."* Andy King, physician associate at Mosborough Health Centre in Sheffield

[Read Andy's story in full](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

## Want to learn more?

- [Find out more about the entry requirements, skills and interests required to enter a career as a physician associate](#)

- <sup>[3]</sup> • [Find out more about the training and development you'll receive as a physician associate](#)
- <sup>[1]</sup> • [View our infographic about physician associates](#) <sup>[4]</sup>

- Pay and conditions Expand / Collapse

Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the [Agenda for Change \(AfC\)](#) <sup>[5]</sup> pay scales which cover all staff except doctors, dentists and the most senior managers. Physician associates will usually start on [AfC](#) <sup>[6]</sup> band 7. Many posts are internships which can be band 6.

Staff in the NHS 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.

- Where the role can lead Expand / Collapse

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

- Job market and vacancies Expand / Collapse

Training opportunities for physician associates are expected to increase by 220% in 2016/17. You can find the universities running the courses in the 'Further information' below. Information on the entry requirements is also [available](#) <sup>[7]</sup>.

You can search for vacancies for trainee physician associates on the [NHS Jobs website](#) <sup>[8]</sup>.

- [Find out more about applications and interviews](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

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](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

- Further information Expand / Collapse

For more information about the role of physician associate, contact:

- [Faculty of Physician Associates](#) <sup>[11]</sup> (at the Royal College of Physicians)
- [Faculty of Perioperative Care](#) <sup>[12]</sup> (at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh)
- [UK & Ireland Universities Board for Physician Associate Education](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

## Other roles that may interest you

- [General practice \(GP\)](#) <sup>[14]</sup>
- [Physicians' assistant - anaesthesia](#) <sup>[15]</sup>
- [Acute internal medicine](#) <sup>[16]</sup>
- [Advanced critical care practitioner](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

medical-associate-professions/physician-associate

## Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/medical-associate-professions/roles-medical-associate-professions/physician-associate/training-development-and-regulation-physician>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/medical-associate-professions/roles-medical-associate-professions/physician-associate/real-life-story-andy-king>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/medical-associate-professions/roles-medical-associate-professions/physician-associate/entry-requirements-skills-and-interests-physician>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/resources/physician-associate-infographic>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC>
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/physician-associateassistant/physician-associate/entry-requirements-skills-and>
- [8] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/planning-your-career/applications-and-interviews>
- [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/gaining-experience>
- [11] <http://www.fparcp.co.uk/>
- [12] <https://fpc.rcsed.ac.uk>
- [13] <http://www.ukiubpae.sgul.ac.uk/>
- [14] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/general-practice-gp>
- [15] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/medical-associate-professions/roles-medical-associate-professions/physicians-assistant-anaesthesia>
- [16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/medicine/acute-internal-medicine>
- [17] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/medical-associate-professions/roles-medical-associate-professions/advanced-critical-care-practitioner>