

Orthopaedic practitioner

Orthopaedic practitioners help patients recover from injury or surgery as quickly as possible by making sure casts and splints are fitted correctly.?

Working life

As an orthopaedic practitioner, you'll apply casts and splints to patients following an accident or surgery or for particular orthopaedic conditions. Casts and splints are used to keep limbs and joints in position while they heal.



You'll need to use the most suitable technique and material. Casts can be made from:

You'll need to use the most suitable technique and material.

- plaster of Paris
- fibreglass
- polypropylene
- polyester substrates

You may also:

- advise patients after the splint or cast has been fitted, sometimes over the phone
- apply dressings to wounds
- remove dressings and stitches from wounds
- remove casts and splints
- order supplies
- update patients' records

You may be known as a casting technician or plaster technician.

Orthopaedic practitioners work in trauma and orthopaedic clinics. They may work with patients of all ages and conditions or they may specialise in, for example, children or older people.

Entry requirements?

Employers expect good numeracy and literacy. They may ask for GCSEs. Employers may also ask for a qualification such as an NVQ or BTEC in health care. It may be possible to enter by working as a healthcare assistant [1] or clinical support worker [2] in a trauma and orthopaedic clinic. Once you have experience of working with patients you could approach the casting room staff to ask for an opportunity to get experience of casting work.

Skills and personal characteristics

As an orthopaedic practitioner, you need to be:

- confident and reassuring
- able to deal with people who are upset
- happy to be hands-on with patients
- willing to work with messy materials
- able to follow procedures
- able to work quickly and carefully
- able to work alone or in a team

You'll also need:

- good manual (hand) skills
- organisation skills
- good communication skills
- the ability to explain treatment to patients and to offer advice as appropriate

Training and development?

To become a fully qualified orthopaedic practitioner, you need to take the British Casting Certificate. You can take the five-week course as a block or by day release. To get on the course, you need at least a year's experience of casting work.

- Pay and conditions

Expand / collapse

Clinical support staff working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) [3] pay system. As an orthopaedic practitioner you will typically start on AfC [4] band 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at bands 4 and 5. Orthopaedic practitioners work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. They may work shifts, which could involve nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. Terms and conditions will usually be different for clinical support staff working outside of the NHS.

- Where the role can lead

Expand / collapse

You could progress to senior roles within the plaster room. You could apply to train as an assistant practitioner [5] or with the appropriate qualifications for entry to university, train as a healthcare professional such as nurse [6], physiotherapist [7], or prosthetist/orthotist [8].

- Job market and vacancies

Expand / collapse

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 NHS values apply in your everyday work. Find out more about NHS values [9].

Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [10]. Some of the current vacancies are below.

- View Vacancy [11]

Orthopaedic Practitioner

East Surrey Hospital, Canada Avenue, Redhill, RH1 5RH



Salary:

£26,152 - £32,145 per annum, salary including HCA



Type:

Fixed term



Employer:

Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

- View Vacancy

- View Vacancy [12]

Orthopaedic Practitioner

Bristol Royal Infirmary, Bristol, BS2 8HW



Salary:

£24,907 - £30,615 pa



Type:

Permanent



Employer:

University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust

- View Vacancy

- View Vacancy [13]

Senior Orthopaedic Practitioner

Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother Hospital, Margate, Margate, CT9 4AN



Salary:

£24,907 - £30,615 per annum



Type:

Permanent



Employer:

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust

- View Vacancy

- View Vacancy [14]

Orthopaedic Practitioner Assistant

Glangwili General Hospital, Carmarthen, SA31 2AF



Salary:

?19,737 - ?21,142 per annum

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Type:

Permanent

■

Employer:

Hywel Dda University Health Board

■ [View Vacancy](#)

○ [View Vacancy \[15\]](#)

Orthopaedic Scrub Practitioner

Peterborough, PE3 9AQ

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Salary:

Competitive

■

Type:

Permanent

■

Employer:

Ramsay Health Care UK

■ [View Vacancy](#)

○ [View Vacancy \[16\]](#)

Theatre Practitioner - Orthopaedic Scrub Practitioner

Cheadle, SK8 2PX

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Salary:

competitive salary plus benefits

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Type:

Permanent

**Employer:**

BMI Healthcare



- Further information

Expand / collapse

- Association of Orthopaedic Practitioners [17]
- British Orthopaedic Association [18]
- Orthopaedic and Trauma Alliance [19]

Other roles that may interest you

- Prosthetic technician [20]
- Prosthetist/orthotist [21]
- Dentist [22]
- Dental nurse [23]

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/orthopaedic-practitioner>

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/healthcare-assistant>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/assistant-practitioner>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing>
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/physiotherapist-0>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/prosthetistorthotist>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>
- [10] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>
- [11] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916137564>
- [12] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916144783>
- [13] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916142435>
- [14] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916145011>
- [15] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916147769>
- [16] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916063760>
- [17] <http://www.aop-uk.com>
- [18] <http://www.boa.ac.uk>
- [19] <http://www.ot-alliance.org.uk>
- [20] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/prosthetic-technician>

[21] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/prosthetistorthotist>

[22] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dentist>

[23] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-nurse>