Nursing associate

Nursing associate is a new role within the nursing team. Nursing associates work with healthcare support workers and registered nurses to deliver care for patients and the public.

Working life

Nursing associates work across all four fields of nursing: adult, children’s, mental health, and learning disability.

Your skills and responsibilities will vary, depending on the care setting you work in. You’ll need to demonstrate the values and behaviours of the NHS Constitution and a knowledge of physical health, mental health and illness prevention.

Your duties are likely to include:

- undertaking clinical tasks including cannulation, venepuncture and ECGs
- supporting individuals and their families and carers when faced with unwelcome news and life-changing diagnoses
- performing and recording clinical observations such as blood pressure, temperature, respirations and pulse
- discussing and sharing information with registered nurses on a patients’ condition, behaviour, activity and responses
- ensuring the privacy, dignity and safety of individuals is maintained at all times
- recognising issues relating to safeguarding vulnerable children and adults
Entry requirements

To begin your training as a nursing associate, you’ll need GCSEs grade 9 to 4 (A to C) in maths and English, or Functional Skills Level 2 in maths and English. You will also need to demonstrate your ability to study to level 5 foundation degree level and commit to completing the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship programme.

Some places are available through direct application to universities. Applicants accepted onto courses this way will need to fund their own training.

Training and development

You will undertake academic learning one day a week and work-based learning the rest of the week. You’ll be employed in a specific healthcare setting such as an acute, community or mental health hospital, care home or hospice but also gain experience other health and care settings and situations. This will mean travelling to placements and working a mix of...
shifts.

It is very important to plan and manage the competing demands of your job role, study and placements.

You will develop an understanding of all elements of the nursing process and of caring for individuals with particular conditions such as dementia, mental ill health and learning disabilities/difficulties.

Qualified nursing associates will be required to work to a nationally recognised code of conduct. Once you’ve finished your training, you’ll have the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and behaviours to work as a nursing associate.

**Registration**

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC [6]) is responsible for registering and regulating nursing associates. The NMC nursing associate register opened in January 2019.

Read more about the way the NMC regulates nursing associates [7] and see the Standards of proficiency [8] for nursing associates.

- Pay and conditions
  
  Expand / collapse
  
  Trainee nursing associates start on Agenda for Change band 3 [9].

- Where the role can lead
  
  Expand / collapse
  
  The nursing associate role is employed across health and care services. Qualified nursing associates can also go on to train as a registered nurse by putting their training towards a shortened nursing degree or completing a degree-level nurse apprenticeship.

  Find out more about training as a registered nurse [10].

**Nursing careers resource**

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

Visit the RCN/HEE careers resource for clinical support staff [11]

- Job market and vacancies
  
  Expand / collapse
Trainees are sometimes recruited from existing roles as healthcare assistants [12], but all vacancies are available on the NHS [13] Jobs [13] website [13].

Some training places are available through direct application to universities. Applicants accepted onto courses this way will need to fund their own training. Check the UCAS website [14] for courses.

- Further information

Expand / collapse

Visit the Health Education England website [15] for further information about this role and see what former trainees said [16].

Other roles that may interest you

- Healthcare assistant [12]
- Adult nurse [1]
- Assistant practitioner [17]
- Experienced paramedic [18]

Source URL: https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/nursing-associate

Links
[6] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NMC