

Youth intensive psychological practitioner?

Youth intensive psychological practitioners provide psychological assessment and psychologically informed interventions support for young people (13–17 years old) with severe mental health problems.

Based in inpatient and intensive home treatment services, you'll have an important role in supporting young people towards recovery. You'll help them to lead fulfilling lives by ensuring they can access the support they need. This is a new role currently being piloted across England.



Life as a youth intensive psychological practitioner

You'll work as an integral part of a multidisciplinary team, where you'll form collaborative relationships with young people and their families. You'll develop an understanding of their current difficulties and shape the young person's psychological care.

You'll spend much of your time working with other health and care professionals within your team.

You'll be supervised by and work closely with clinical psychologists to help you engage in self-reflection, seek and respond to feedback and develop your professional knowledge and skills.

Under supervision, you'll use assessment, engagement and formulation skills under supervision to make a 'map' of current difficulties and what keeps them going. In this way, you'll support the young person with psychologically-informed, evidence-based interventions and active risk management, as well as strategies for daily living and self-care.

Once qualified, you'll spend at least 20 hours a week seeing patients and their parents and carers, either in an inpatient setting, clinic, in their own homes or via video link or telephone.

You'll have an important role in supporting young people towards recovery.

Your employer will provide you with ongoing training to keep your skills and knowledge up to date.

You'll also develop relationships across the children and young people's mental health and care system to help co-ordinate the most appropriate care for your patients.

How much can I earn?

If you're employed by the NHS, you'll be on a national pay and conditions system called Agenda for Change ^[1] (AfC ^[2]).

There are nine pay bands. As a trainee youth intensive psychological practitioner, you'll be paid at band 4. After qualifying, you'll be paid at band 5, with the opportunity to progress with experience.

Terms and conditions can vary if you are employed outside the NHS.

How about the benefits?

As a youth intensive psychological practitioner, you can:

- be part of an exciting new role established to help transform children and young people's mental health services
- make a difference
- work flexible and part-time hours

If you're employed by the NHS, you'll also have good holiday entitlement and access to:

- fully funded training plus a salary while you train and a job in the service when you qualify
- an excellent pension scheme
- NHS discounts in shops and restaurants

Must-have skills

You'll need a range of skills to be a youth intensive psychological practitioner, including:

- a desire to work closely with children, young people, their families and carers at some of the most difficult points in their lives
- the ability to recognise the expression of emotion in others and how it manifests in their behaviour
- a capacity for study and continued learning
- excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to build trusting and productive relationships with a wide range of people in a variety of situations
- the ability to work well in a multidisciplinary team
- a good understanding of mental health issues
- strong written and verbal communication skills, tailored to a variety of audiences
- the ability to work independently where appropriate and use initiative to think quickly, often in challenging situations and with competing priorities

- the resilience and self-awareness to look after your own mental wellbeing at the same time as supporting others with theirs.

You'll also need to be able to demonstrate the [values of the NHS Constitution](#) [3].

Entry requirements

The one-year youth intensive psychological practitioner postgraduate certificate training programme is a combination of university study and, mostly, gaining practice skills under supervision in both inpatient and intensive community treatment settings.

To apply for training, you'll need either:

- an accredited psychology degree at a minimum level of 2:2, which is recognised by the British Psychological Society (BPS) as enabling eligibility for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership or
- to have completed another qualifying course that confers Graduate Basis Chartered Membership of the BPS

See 'Getting started' on the [BPS website](#) [4] for more details.

Most importantly, you'll need to be able to demonstrate a willingness to work in a hopeful and productive way with young people with severe and complex mental health needs and have the aptitude to work collaboratively in a mental health team.

For a place on the programme, you'll need to apply for a position as a trainee youth intensive psychological practitioner.

To apply, you'll need:

- direct experience of people who use mental health and care services in a personal, voluntary or paid capacity (for example as someone with lived experience or as a carer)
- demonstrable interpersonal skills and values consistent with providing hopeful, person-centred care
- commitment to working with young people with complex mental health needs and their families or carers
- demonstrable ability to study at degree level or above
- good communication and interpersonal skills
- motivation and commitment to undertake and complete the course

How to become a youth intensive psychological practitioner

Your first step is to apply to healthcare organisations offering youth intensive psychological practitioner training posts. You can find these by searching for 'youth intensive psychological practitioner' on the [NHS Jobs website](#) [5]. You can also see some current vacancies below.

While training, you'll typically spend one day a week studying at university (45 days in total) with almost all of this being remote learning. You'll spend the remaining four days a week working in or undertaking specific training tasks in your placement setting. You'll spend time in

both an inpatient and intensive home treatment team as part of your placements.

As part of your training, you'll also be required to undertake a minimum of 40 hours of clinical supervision, of which at least 20 hours should be case management supervision and at least 20 hours clinical skills supervision.

Where a career as a youth intensive psychological practitioner can take you

You could progress to a specialist role in the psychological professions, for example in [clinical psychology](#) [6] or [cognitive behavioural therapy](#) [7], or retrain in another mental healthcare professional role such as nursing or the allied health professions.

It's important to note that a two-year psychological professions funding rule policy was implemented on 1 April 2022. This means that if you start NHS-funded psychological professions training from April 2022, you won't be eligible for NHS funding for further psychological profession training for two years from the expected completion date of your first training, where it would lead to a change in your job role. ?

Visit the [funding for psychological professions training programmes web page](#) [8] for more information about NHS funding.??

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Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates/agenda-change-pay-rates> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-nhs/nhs-constitution> [4] <https://www.bps.org.uk/getting-started> [5] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/roles/clinical-psychologist> [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/roles-psychological-therapies/cbt-therapist> [8] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/mental-health/psychological-professions/nhs-funding-psychological-professions-training-programmes> [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/node/4141/childrens-wellbeing-practitioner> [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/node/4141/education-mental-health-practitioner> [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/roles/psychological-wellbeing-practitioner> [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/support-time-and-recovery-worker>