

Compare roles in health

Not sure where to start with the hundreds of NHS careers? Use our compare roles section to get bite-size information on the entry requirements and training, pay and conditions, prospects and skills needed of up to three roles. If there is something that you think you could do, then get more in-depth information on the role.

Don't forget, you can also save your role comparisons by registering with us.

- **Prison nurse** ^[1]

Nurses working in prison healthcare provide the same level of care and support as nurses in the community.

Training and qualifications required

To work as a nurse in prison healthcare you'll need to be a qualified, registered nurse and hold a current registration with the NMC. Training will be provided to help you adapt to this unique environment. There is no specific qualification required to enable a nurse to work in a prison. Informal visits are encouraged, so contact the relevant healthcare provider for the prison site for further details. Anyone applying to work within a prison will go through an enhanced prison vetting process.

Expected working hours and salary range

Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales. This pay system covers all staff except doctors, dentists and the most senior managers. As a prison healthcare nurse, you could work directly for the NHS or be employed by a private healthcare provider delivering services on behalf of the NHS. Prison nurses in the NHS usually start at band 5 and work standard hours of 37.5 per week.

Desirable skills and values

Your personality and communication skills are crucial components of being a nurse in prison healthcare. You'll need resilience, patience, compassion and communication/problem solving skills. Conflict management skills and a good knowledge of the criminal justice system and how it relates to the role will also help.

Prospects

With further training and experience, prison nurses can apply for more senior nursing roles, such as senior practice nurse/nurse practitioner and advanced nurse practitioner positions either within prisons or general practices.

Related roles

- [Mental health nurse](#) ^[2]
- [General practice nurse](#) ^[3]
- [Clinical psychologist](#) ^[4]
- [Public health nurse](#) ^[5]

• [Housekeeper](#) ^[6]

Housekeepers help make sure that hospital wards and other settings are clean, safe and attractive places for patients and staff.

Training and qualifications required

There are no set entry requirements. Employers expect a good standard of numeracy and literacy and may ask for GCSEs in English and maths. They may also ask for relevant qualifications such in hotel services or health care. When you start work as a housekeeper you will get the training you need to do the job. This includes an introduction to the department and the ward and its systems and procedures. You will also have training in health and safety and manual handling. You may be encouraged to take a qualification in housekeeping.

Expected working hours and salary range

Housekeepers working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. You would typically start on AfC band 2. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions such as domestic services team manager or senior housekeeper at band 3. Housekeepers usually work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. They may work shifts, which, in some departments, could involve nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. Terms and conditions will usually be different for housekeepers working outside of the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

Housekeepers need to be physically fit for moving, lifting and cleaning, able to work as part of a team, friendly and caring, understanding of patients' needs, able to take responsibility for their own work, health and safety aware, flexible and adaptable and able to follow instructions and procedures. They also need good organisational skills and good communication skills with staff and patients.

Prospects

With experience, housekeepers can become team leaders, supervising the work of other domestic services staff. They can progress to become managers, responsible for a department or area. Housekeepers may be able to move into other areas such as facilities management. You could move into a clinical support role, such as healthcare assistant or maternity support worker. Or you could apply to train as a nurse or other healthcare professional.

Related roles

- [Chef/cook](#) ^[7]
- [Decontamination science \(sterile services and flexible endoscopy\)](#) ^[8]
- [Healthcare assistant](#) ^[9]
- [Hotel services management](#) ^[10]

• **Cytopathology** ^[11]

Cytopathology is a branch of pathology involving the study and diagnosis of diseases at the cellular level using a light microscope.

Training and qualifications required

With GCSEs or other level-2 qualifications, you can apply for a post as a cervical cytology screener and study for a Cervical Screening Programme Certificate in Cervical Cytology. There are sometimes opportunities to enter at associate level through an apprenticeship and work towards a QCF level-3 qualification in healthcare science.

Expected working hours and salary range

NHS staff will usually work a standard 37.5 hours per week. They may work a shift pattern. Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales. Terms and conditions of service can vary for employers outside the NHS. Salaries for healthcare science staff working in cytopathology will range typically range from AfC bands 2 to 4, depending on the role and level of responsibility.

Desirable skills and values

An interest in science and technology, good communication skills, comfortable using modern technology and complex equipment, able to follow clear instruction and procedures, pay great attention to detail and be able to work as part of a team.

Prospects

Once in post as a healthcare science associate or assistant you'll work towards relevant healthcare science qualifications (QCF, NVQs, foundation degrees (or equivalent)) while you're working. These are underpinned by an awards and qualifications framework.

Related roles

- [Biomedical science](#) ^[12]
- [Cellular sciences](#) ^[13]
- [Experienced paramedic](#) ^[14]
- [Emergency care assistant](#) ^[15]

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