

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.

- **General practitioner** ^[1]

General practitioners (GPs) treat all common medical conditions and refer patients to hospitals and other medical services for urgent and specialist treatment.

Training and qualifications required

Training usually starts with a five year first degree in medicine. You'll then complete two years of foundation training and three years of specialty training. The length of training can vary according to your circumstances.

Expected working hours and salary range

NHS salaried GPs earn at least £60,000 a year. GPs who run their own practices will usually earn more. Doctors may work up to 48 hours a week. The working hours may sometimes extend beyond the normal working day to include early mornings, evenings and weekends.

Desirable skills and values

You'll need excellent clinical skills and be able to diagnose and manage multiple diseases and problems whilst dealing with the uncertainty of clinical presentations. You'll manage time and people well, have highly developed communication and change management skills and work well in a team. It's important that you can assess risk and take initiative in highly pressurised and emotive situations.

Prospects

You could specialise in areas such as sports medicine, adolescent health, diabetes or palliative medicine, get involved in research or teach medical students or postgraduate doctors in training.

Related roles

- General practice nurse ^[2]
- Practice manager ^[3]

- Pharmacist ^[4]
- General psychiatry ^[5]

• Respiratory physiology and sleep sciences ^[6]

Respiratory ^[7] physiology ^[8] and sleep science involves the diagnosis and treatment of lung disease and sleep disorders.

Training and qualifications required

At least two sciences among your A-levels (or equivalent level-3 qualifications) if applying for a BSc (Hons) healthcare science (respiratory physiology and sleep sciences) or NHS Practitioner Training Programme (PTP). For the NHS Scientist Training Programme you'll need a 1st or 2.1 either in an undergraduate honours degree or an integrated master's degree in a relevant pure or applied science subject, such as physiology, pure or applied physics, engineering, biology or human biology or sports science (if there is significant scientific content). If you have a relevant 2.2 honours degree, you'll also be considered if you have a higher degree in a subject relevant to the specialism for which you are applying. Evidence of research experience is desirable. To enter Higher Specialist Scientist Training, you'll need registration and experience as a clinical scientist.

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. As a healthcare science practitioner, you'd usually start on band 5, with opportunities to progress to more senior positions. Trainee clinical scientists train at band 6 level, and qualified clinical scientists are generally appointed at band 7. With experience and further qualifications, including Higher Specialist Scientist Training, you could apply for posts up to band 9. Terms and conditions of service can vary for employers outside the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

An interest in science and technology, effective communication skills, a mature, calm, confident but sympathetic approach to achieve the best outcome for each patient, confidence with technology, systems and processes, and the ability to work as part of a team.

Prospects

With further training or experience or both, you may be able to develop your career further and apply for vacancies in areas such as further specialisation, management, research, or teaching. In respiratory physiology, healthcare science staff are developing new techniques in transplanting of lungs from donors to recipients.

Related roles

- Cardiac sciences ^[9]
- Neurophysiology ^[10]
- Respiratory medicine ^[11]
- Knowledge and library services ^[12]

Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/general-practitioner> [2]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/general-practice-nurse> [3]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/management/roles-management/practice-manager> [4]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pharmacy/roles-pharmacy/pharmacist> [5]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/psychiatry/general-psychiatry> [6]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physiological-sciences/respiratory-physiology-and-sleep-sciences> [7]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Respiratory> [8]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Physiology> [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physiological-sciences/cardiac-sciences> [10]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physiological-sciences/neurophysiology> [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/medicine/respiratory-medicine> [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/health-informatics/roles-health-informatics/knowledge-and-library-services>