

Compare roles in health

Not sure where to start with the hundreds of careers in health? 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.

Purchasing and contract management [1]

Making sure that the NHS has the necessary goods and services is vital to the delivery of healthcare. As a purchasing and contract manager, your role will be making sure this is done smoothly allowing our healthcare professionals to focus on our patients.

Training and qualifications required

You could work your way up from a business administration apprenticeship and/or level 3 qualification in business studies or degree with purchasing and supply modules. Qualifications awarded by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply are usually required for managers working in this field and are offered at various levels.

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. In purchasing and contract management, your career in the NHS would typically start at Agenda for Change Band 5, with opportunities to progress to positions at Bands 6 and 7, and the most senior roles rising to Band 8c for example. Staff in the NHS will usually work a standard 37.5 hours per week. They may work a shift pattern. Terms and conditions of service can vary for employers outside the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

To work in purchasing and contract management, you'll typically need effective business acumen, strong negotiating skills, good communication skills, leadership skills, organisational skills, a willingness to work with others and respect their views, confidence with numbers, confidence with information technology, the ability to challenge the way things are and find better alternatives and a commitment to the ideals of quality and fairness in delivering healthcare.

Prospects

With further training and/or experience, you may be able to develop your career further and apply for more senior managerial roles ? potentially at director level, with a broader remit. Progression for those with ability is typically via general management with a large healthcare provider. Relocation for promotion is common.

More diverse routes are now opening up, for example, jointly-funded posts between health and social services.

Related roles

- Estates manager [2]
- Project manager [3]
- Strategic management [4]
- Dentist [5]

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