

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.

Operating department practitioner [1]

Operating department practitioners play a major role in each phase of a person's operation.

Training and qualifications required

You'll need to study for a 2-year year diploma or 3-year degree in operating department practice at university. Part-time courses are available. You will usually need a minimum of five GCSEs at grades A-C (or equivalent) plus A-level (or equivalent) qualifications. These will vary depending on the university so check with the universities you are considering applying to. A degree standard apprenticeship in operating department practice has also been approved.

Expected working hours and salary range

Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales. ODPs in the NHS will usually start at band 5 and can progress to roles at band 8 and above. You'll work standard hours of 37.5 per week. Terms and conditions will vary for any jobs outside of the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

You'll need a variety of skills to be an operating department practitioner including a caring and compassionate nature, being able to work in a highly technical area, excellent problem solving and organisational skills, very good communication skills, be able to stand for long periods and react quickly in an emergency within a confined area. If you're applying for a role either directly in or working on behalf of the NHS, you'll be asked to demonstrate the values of the NHS Constitution.

Prospects

You'll have several options to progress your career in operating department practice, including management, education, research and advanced practice. Experienced ODPs can take further training approved by the Royal College of Surgeons to work as surgical care practitioners. After a typical two-year training programme, you'll be able to complete certain surgical procedures under the supervision of a consultant surgeon.

Related roles

- Theatre nurse [2]
- Theatre support worker [3]
- General surgery [4]
- Anaesthesia [5]

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