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.

- ## Medical secretary/personal assistant [1]

NHS medical secretaries make sure that our frontline staff are able to dedicate their time to patient care while our personal assistants support our senior leaders.

Training and qualifications required

Medical secretaries and personal assistants have usually worked elsewhere in the NHS so they have experience of medical terminology and NHS ways of working. There are no set entry requirements although employers expect excellent keyboard skills. They may ask for qualifications in typing or word processing. Employers also expect a good standard of literacy, numeracy and IT skills. They may ask for GCSEs or equivalent qualifications. You'll get the training you need to do the job and be offered the chance to take qualifications from organisations including AMSPAR and the BSMSA.

Expected working hours and salary range

Medical secretaries and personal assistants in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. You'd typically be on a salary at AfC band 3 or 4 and could progress, with further training and qualifications to posts at band 5. Terms and conditions will be different for administrative staff working outside of the NHS. Medical secretaries/personal assistants work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. In some jobs, this could involve early starts, evenings and weekends.

Desirable skills and values

As a medical secretary or personal assistant, you'll need to work accurately and methodically, meet deadlines, use medical terminology, pay attention to detail, work in a team but use your own initiative, work with all types of people, be helpful and reassuring if dealing with patients and their families. You'll need excellent keyboard, IT and organisational skills as well as good spelling and grammar.

Prospects

With experience, you could become a manager, responsible for an admin or secretarial department. Some medical secretaries/personal assistants move into other areas such as

finance, HR or health records. You may also have the opportunity to move into informatics, specialising in electronic data or into IT.

Related roles

- Health records staff [2]
- Finance staff [3]
- Human resources staff [4]
- Administrative management [5]