

Compare roles in health

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• **Nutritionist** ^[1]

Nutritionists are the heart of a patient's health by using their knowledge of the science of food to help individuals and groups make the right choices about what they eat.

Training and qualifications required

There is no set entry route to become a nutritionist. The Association for Nutrition (AfN) maintains the UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists (UKVRN). There are three categories of UKVRN registrant: (i) registered nutritionist (RNutr) with nutrition specialism in public health, nutrition science, sport & exercise, food or animal nutrition; (ii) associate nutritionist (ANutr); (iii) Fellow of AfN (FAfN). All registrants have a degree in nutrition sciences or substantial peer-recognised professional nutrition experience and adhere to AfN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance. To get onto a nutrition degree course you usually need appropriate level 3 qualifications. For a Masters you need a relevant degree or professional qualification. You will have the training you need to do the job which is likely to include an introduction to the area and local groups and agencies. Nutritionists need to make sure they keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

Expected working hours and salary range

Nutritionists working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. You would typically start on AfC band 5, but you should check individual job vacancies for details. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at bands 6 and above. Most nutritionists working in or with the NHS work standard hours, which are likely to be around 37.5 a week. They may work some evenings or weekends. Elsewhere the hours may vary depending on the needs of the employer or the project. Terms and conditions will usually be different for nutritionists working outside of the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

Nutritionists need to be interested in science and food, positive and able to motivate others, understanding of other people and their lifestyles and able to explain complex things simply. They also need an understanding of science, organisational and communication skills.

Prospects

As you gain experience, you can take on more senior roles in projects and departments. You could progress to larger projects or become a project leader or co-ordinator.

Related roles

- [Dietitian](#) [2]
- [Dietetic assistant](#) [3]
- [Knowledge and library services](#) [4]
- [Experienced paramedic](#) [5]

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