

## 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.

- **Chemical pathology** <sup>[1]</sup>

Chemical pathology doctors combine laboratory and clinical skills, using biochemical laboratory tests to diagnose disease and manage patients.

### Training and qualifications required

You'll follow a set pattern of training which usually starts with a five year first degree in medicine and two years of foundation training. You will then undertake five years of specialist training (ST1-5). This period of training will include completing your royal college exams. Length of training can vary according to your circumstances.

### Expected working hours and salary range

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. You'll first earn a salary when you start your foundation training after medical school. The basic salary ranges from £29,384 to £34,012. Once you start your specialty training as a doctor in chemical pathology employed by the NHS, you can expect to earn a salary of at least £40,257, which can increase to between £84,559 and £114,003 as a consultant.

### Desirable skills and values

You'll need excellent communication skills to manage a wide range of relationships with colleagues, and patients and their families. You'll be emotionally resilient, have excellent problem-solving and diagnostic skills and work well in teams and under pressure. You'll also be very organised for the benefit of patients.

### Prospects

In 2021, there were 104 chemical pathology consultants working in the NHS in England. In addition, there were 16 applications for 11 specialty training places. You could specialise or conduct research in areas such as metabolic bone disease or inherited metabolic disease (IMD), teach medical students or postgraduate students in training or get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector.

## Related roles

- [Endocrinology and diabetes](#) [2]
- [Microbiology \(healthcare scientist\)](#) [3]
- [Haematology \(doctor\)](#) [4]
- [Histopathology \(doctor\)](#) [5]

## • [Orthopaedic practitioner](#) [6]

Orthopaedic practitioners help patients recover from injury or surgery as quickly as possible by making sure casts and splints are fitted correctly.

### Training and qualifications required

To become a fully qualified orthopaedic practitioner, you need to take the British Casting Certificate. You can take the five-week course as a block or by day release. To get on the course, you need at least a year's experience of casting work.

### Expected working hours and salary range

As an orthopaedic practitioner you will typically start on AfC band 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at bands 4 and 5. Orthopaedic practitioners work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. They may work shifts, which could involve nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. Terms and conditions will usually be different for clinical support staff working outside of the NHS.

### Desirable skills and values

To work as an orthopaedic practitioner, you need to be happy to be hands-on with patients, willing to work with messy materials, able to deal with people who are upset, confident and reassuring, able to follow procedures, work quickly and carefully, and able to work alone or in a team. You'll also need good manual (hand) skills, organisation skills, good communication skills with the ability to explain treatment to patients and reassure them.

### Prospects

You could progress to senior roles within the plaster room. You could apply to train as an assistant practitioner or with the appropriate qualifications for entry to university, train as a healthcare professional such as nurse, physiotherapist, prosthetist or orthotist.

## Related roles

- [Prosthetic technician](#) [7]
- [Prosthetist/orthotist](#) [8]
- [Knowledge and library services](#) [9]
- [Experienced paramedic](#) [10]

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