

## 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.

- **Emergency care assistant** <sup>[1]</sup>

Emergency care assistants (ECAs) work with paramedics <sup>[2]</sup> as part of emergency ambulance crews attending 999 calls.

### Training and qualifications required

There are no set entry requirements to become an ECA. Most employers expect good standards of literacy and numeracy. Some may ask for qualifications such as GCSEs, NVQs or equivalent. It would be an advantage if you have worked with elderly or disabled people, either in paid employment or voluntary work. First aid work would also be useful, such as volunteering with St John Ambulance or the British Red Cross.

### Expected working hours and salary range

Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales. Although ECAs in the NHS will usually work standard hours of 37.5 per week, these are on a shift pattern. Shifts cover 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. So an ECA's work pattern includes evenings, nights, early starts, weekends and bank holidays. ECAs need to be prepared to work outdoors in all conditions, where necessary. Terms and conditions can vary for employers outside of the NHS.

### Desirable skills and values

An emergency care assistant, skills include being able to understand a situation quickly, confident and reassuring, be able to follow procedures, good communication skills and excellent driving skills.

### Prospects

You could progress to become a team leader or supervisor. You would be in charge of a team of ECAs, responsible for allocating work and drawing up shift rotas. You could apply to train as a paramedic. You would have to pass entrance exams and meet other requirements before being accepted onto a paramedic course.

## Related roles

- Call handler/emergency medical dispatcher [3]
- Paramedic [4]
- Patient Transport Service (PTS) call handler [5]
- Ambulance care assistant and Patient Transport Service (PTS) driver [6]

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## Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/emergency-care-assistant> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/paramedic> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/emergency-medical-dispatchercall-handler> [4] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/paramedic](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/roles-allied-health-professions/paramedic) [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/patient-transport-service-pts-call-handler> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/ambulance-care-assistant-and-patient-transport-service-pts-driver>