

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.

• Public health nurse ^[1]

Public health nurses are qualified and registered nurses or midwives who have then chosen to gain experience or undertake training to specialise in areas such as health protection or sexual health.

Training and qualifications required

Only trained and registered nurses can apply for a role as a public health nurse. Entry criteria vary between employers and specific positions, but experience or further qualifications in community nursing, health visiting, occupational health, infection prevention and control or practice nursing may be an advantage.

Expected working hours and salary range

Public health nurses working for the NHS will usually work at around bands 6-7 of Agenda for Change (AfC) or equivalent local authority pay scales and work standard hours of 37.5 per week. There may be exceptions to this depending on the nature of the role, for example evening and weekend work to increase access to services.

Desirable skills and values

As a public health nurse, you'll be passionate about public health. You'll have excellent communication skills, project management and analytical skills. You'll be able to work across multi-agency or multi-disciplinary settings to engage, develop and sustain networks and partnerships. You'll be a good problem solver and have an ability to respond to sudden unexpected demands.

Prospects

You might decide to follow an academic career pathway, working in higher education or research, or you might decide to take up a senior practitioner or managerial role. You may also choose to qualify as a specialist community public health nurse (SCPHN).

Related roles

- [Adult nurse](#) ^[2]
- [Occupational health nurse](#) ^[3]
- [Learning disability nurse](#) ^[4]
- [Mental health nurse](#) ^[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]

• [Communications/public relations staff](#) ^[11]

Communications and public relations (PR) staff help NHS organisations engage with patients, their local communities, staff and other interested groups including the media.

Training and qualifications required

Although there is no set entry route, communications and PR staff often have a relevant qualification. This could be in PR, marketing, journalism or communications, often at degree level. Employers may expect experience, which could be paid or voluntary. It may be possible to gain experience in an admin job in a communications department. When you start the job, you'll be given the training you need including an introduction to the department and its systems and procedures. You'll be expected to keep your knowledge and skills up to date. Your employer may offer you the chance to go on short courses on particular topics (eg social media, web development, etc) and you may take further professional qualifications in communication, marketing and PR.

Expected working hours and salary range

Communications and PR staff working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. You will typically start in a position on AfC band 2 or 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at bands 4 and 5. Senior managers will be paid more. Communications and PR staff in the NHS work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. They may have to attend meetings or events in the evenings or at weekends. Some may be part of an on-call rota for media enquiries. Terms and conditions will usually be different for clinical support staff working outside of the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

Working in communications and PR, you'll need to be creative, able to communicate messages clearly, willing to work under pressure, accurate, with an eye for detail and able to deal with sensitive situations. You'll also need excellent writing skills, excellent speaking and presentation skills, good networking, research and social media skills.

Prospects

With experience, communications and PR staff can progress to become managers of a department or area. With further experience they could become a director of communications, responsible for all communications and PR in an organisation. There may also be opportunities to work outside the NHS.

Related roles

- [Communications and corporate affairs](#) ^[12]
- [Knowledge and library services](#) ^[9]
- [Experienced paramedic](#) ^[10]
- [Emergency care assistant](#) ^[13]

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