

# Compare roles in health

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Don't forget, you can also save your role comparisons by registering with us.

## • Health play staff <sup>[1]</sup>

Health play staff support children through therapeutic play. This helps to make their healthcare experience enjoyable and reduces anxiety and the risk of psychological trauma.

### Training and qualifications required

You could enter a role as a play assistant with a relevant childcare qualification at level 3. Experience of working with children will be an advantage. Most employers expect health play specialists to be registered with the Healthcare Play Specialist Education Trust. To register, you need a foundation degree in healthcare play specialism. This is a two-year part-time course. If you are not already working in healthcare play, you need to arrange a placement during the course. A level 5 apprenticeship standard for health play specialists has been approved for delivery.

### Expected working hours and salary range

Most staff working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. As a play assistant, you will typically be on AfC band 3. As a health play specialist, you will be on band 4 or 5 (as a senior health play specialist) and with further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions. Health play staff in the NHS work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. Terms and conditions will usually be different for health play staff working outside of the NHS.

### Desirable skills and values

To work in health play, you need to be interested in working with children, imaginative and fun, caring and kind, approachable and reassuring, able to deal with other people's emotions (both children and adults), willing to work with parents and carers, health and safety conscious and aware of child protection and safeguarding. You'll also need excellent communication skills (including listening) with adults and children, good organisational and observational skills.

### Prospects

After working as a play assistant, with further training and experience, you could apply for positions as a health play specialist. You could then apply for posts as a senior play specialist,

responsible for a team. With the appropriate qualifications needed for university study, you could apply to train as a healthcare professional such as a nurse or occupational therapist.

## Related roles

- [Children's nurse](#) [2]
- [Neonatal nurse](#) [3]
- [Newborn hearing screener](#) [4]
- [Paediatrician](#) [5]

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## Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/corporate-services/health-play-staff/health-play-staff> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/childrens-nurse> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/neonatal-nurse> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/newborn-hearing-screener> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/paediatrics/paediatrician>