

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.

• **Plumber** ^[1]

Heating systems and water supply is crucial for a successful NHS. Plumbers in the NHS make sure these are safe and in good working order.

Training and qualifications required

There are no set entry requirements but employers expect plumbers to have a qualification and experience in plumbing and/or heating and ventilation. To train as a plumber, you usually need at least three GCSEs (or equivalent) including maths, English and science. Employers may ask for some experience in construction or other practical work. An apprenticeship in an estates support role can provide this. Employers may ask for a driving licence. When you start as a trainee plumber, your training will include health and safety, how to use the tools and equipment and all aspects of plumbing, drainage and heating work. You'll be expected to study for vocational qualifications and may be encouraged to become multi-skilled by training in, for example, painting and decorating or tiling.

Expected working hours and salary range

Estates staff working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. As an estates support worker, you would typically start on AfC band 2. As a qualified plumber, you will typically start on AfC band 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at bands 4 and above. Plumbers in the NHS work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. The job may involve shifts including early starts, evenings and weekends. Plumbers may be part of an on-call rota for emergency cover. Terms and conditions will usually be different for plumbers working outside of the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

Plumbers need to be interested in practical work and repairs, able to follow technical instructions, accurate and methodical, health and safety aware, willing to work at heights where necessary and able to use tools. They also need good manual (hand) skills, organisational skills and time management skills.

Prospects

Once fully qualified and with experience, a plumber can become a team leader, supervising the work of others. With further experience you could progress to manager, responsible for maintenance and repair services in a hospital, area or trust. Plumbers may be able to move into other estates services roles. They can apply to train as engineers. There are opportunities outside the NHS. Some plumbers become self-employed by setting up a business, either on their own or with one or more colleagues.

Related roles

- Painter and decorator [2]
- Carpenter/joiner [3]
- Tiler [4]
- Estates technician [5]

• Theatre support worker [6]

Theatre support workers are the glue keeping the surgical team together. They make sure each member of the team is able to do their job effectively.

Training and qualifications required

There are no set entry requirements. Employers expect a good standard of numeracy and literacy and may ask for GCSEs (or equivalent) in English and maths and may well ask for experience of healthcare. Most have worked in the NHS in another healthcare role such as healthcare assistant or other clinical support role. You could gain experience of healthcare by securing a healthcare-related apprenticeship, and then applying for a permanent position as a healthcare assistant or other clinical support role. When you start as a theatre support worker you will be trained. Your training will include health and safety, infection control and an introduction to the department and its systems and procedures. You will be encouraged to take relevant vocational qualifications. Apprenticeships in Health - Perioperative Support (Intermediate, Advanced and Higher levels) may be available.

Expected working hours and salary range

As a member of the theatre support staff in the NHS, you will typically start on Agenda for Change band 2 or 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at band 4. Theatre support staff work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. Some may work shifts including 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

As a theatre support worker, you'll need to be willing to be in operating theatre areas during surgery, calm and reassuring, health and safety aware, able to follow procedures, be part of a team but responsible for your own work. You'll also need good organisational, communication and team working skills.

Prospects

With experience, a theatre support worker can become a senior theatre support worker, supervising the work of a team. Theatre support workers can apply for other roles in the wider healthcare team such as healthcare assistant. With the qualifications necessary for university study, they can also apply to train as a theatre nurse, operating department practitioner or other healthcare professional.

Related roles

- [Operating department practitioner](#) [7]
- [Porter](#) [8]
- [Experienced paramedic](#) [9]
- [Emergency care assistant](#) [10]

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Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/plumber> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/painter-and-decorator> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/carpenterjoiner> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/tiler> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/estates-technician> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/theatre-support-worker> [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/operating-department-practitioner> [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/support-services/porter> [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/experienced-paramedic> [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/emergency-care-assistant>