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- **Old age psychiatry** ^[1]

Old age psychiatrists provide specialist and holistic ^[2] assessment, treatment and ongoing care for older people experiencing mental health problems such as dementia, personality disorders and schizophrenia.

Training and qualifications required

Training usually starts with a five year first degree in medicine and two years of foundation training. You will then undertake three years of core training (CT1-3), followed by three years of specialist training (ST4-6). 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 an old age psychiatrist 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 emotional resilience, empathy and compassion with a holistic approach. The ability to empathise and show compassion are vital. Excellent communication and leadership skills are also important along with good problem solving, time management and decision making skills. You'll also need to be able to work effectively as part of a multidisciplinary team.

Prospects

In 2021, there were 529 consultants in old age psychiatry working in the NHS in England. In 2020, there were 57 applications for 60 training places. You could specialise or conduct research, teach medical students or postgraduate students in training or get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector.

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