

# 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.

## • Assistant practitioner <sup>[1]</sup>

Assistant practitioners are experienced staff working in support roles, alongside registered healthcare professionals.

### Training and qualifications required

To apply to train as an assistant practitioner, you have to be working in the NHS, often in a clinical support role such as healthcare assistant, dietetic assistant, maternity support worker, etc. As well as healthcare experience, trainee assistant practitioners have a relevant healthcare qualification at level 3, such as a BTEC, CACHE or Access to HE course. You'll be given the training you need for the job, including an introduction to the department and its procedures. You'll usually be expected to study part time for a foundation degree in health or social care and to keep your skills and knowledge up to date with regular training.

### Expected working hours and salary range

Clinical support staff working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. As an assistant practitioner, you would usually be on AfC band 4. There are sometimes opportunities for trainee assistant practitioners at AfC band 3. You'll usually work standard hours of around 37.5 a week and 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

As an assistant practitioner, you'll need to be caring and kind, physically strong for lifting and patients and equipment, willing to be hands-on with patients, able to follow instructions and procedures, able to work in a team but use their own initiative, able to explain procedures to patients, careful and methodical. You'll also need good communication skills, including listening, good organisational and observational skills.

### Prospects

With experience and training you could become a senior assistant practitioner, supervising the work of other clinical support staff. With experience, and as long as you can demonstrate that

you have the academic ability to study at degree level, you could apply to train as a healthcare professional such as a nurse, dietitian, physiotherapist, podiatrist, healthcare science practitioner, etc.

## Related roles

- [Healthcare assistant](#) <sup>[2]</sup>
- [Healthcare science assistants and associates](#) <sup>[3]</sup>
- [Knowledge and library services](#) <sup>[4]</sup>
- [Experienced paramedic](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

## • [Clinical informatics](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

[Clinical informatics](#) <sup>[7]</sup> staff capture, communicate and use data and clinical knowledge to support health professionals. They also develop and implement a range of digital tools to support this.

### Training and qualifications required

Entry requirements will differ depending on the role. It may be possible to enter an entry level post with no formal qualifications, but GCSEs or equivalent qualifications are an advantage. Apprenticeships in health informatics are also available. Other roles will require very specific professional qualifications such as a medical or nursing degree. The NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme also has a health informatics strand for graduates with relevant degree.

### Expected working hours and salary range

Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales. This pay system covers all staff except doctors, dentists and the most senior managers. Clinical informatics staff in the NHS will usually work standard hours of 37.5 per week. Terms and conditions can vary for employers outside of the NHS.

### Desirable skills and values

You'll need to be interested in finding ways of improving health services through the imaginative use of data and information. If you have a clinical background, you'll have a thorough understanding of how health services operate, while you are likely to be interested in harnessing the power of IT and data. A range of skills are needed for a career in clinical informatics including communication, information gathering, ICT. You'll also need to be enthusiastic, the ability to work accurately under pressure and on your own initiative and to work in a team.

### Prospects

There are a wide range of opportunities, such as clinical audit, as well as openings to develop your own problem-solving projects or research. There are also opportunities to progress your career into senior management roles. Most NHS organisations will now have chief information officers who lead the delivery of ICT systems locally, regionally and nationally. The NHS has developed a number of opportunities to support you as you progress your career in clinical informatics. Many of these will count towards your continuing professional development and may lead to a formal professional qualification.

## Related roles

- [Education and training roles](#) [8]
- [Information management staff](#) [9]
- [Clinical bioinformatics \(health informatics\)](#) [10]
- [Clinical bioinformatics \(genomics\)](#) [11]

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## Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/assistant-practitioner> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-support-worker/roles-healthcare-support-worker/healthcare-assistant> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/healthcare-science-assistant-and-associate> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/health-informatics/roles-health-informatics/knowledge-and-library-services> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/experienced-paramedic> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/explore-roles/health-informatics/health-informatics/roles-health-informatics/roles-health-informatics/clinical-informatics> [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Informatics> [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/health-informatics/roles-health-informatics/education-and-training-roles> [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/health-informatics/roles-health-informatics/information-management-staff> [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/clinical-bioinformatics/clinical-bioinformatics-health-informatics> [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/clinical-bioinformatics/clinical-bioinformatics-genomics>