

## 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.

### • **Ambulance care assistant and Patient Transport Service (PTS) driver** <sup>[1]</sup>

Ambulance care assistants or Patient Transport Service (PTS) drivers drive disabled, elderly, sick or vulnerable people to and from outpatient clinics, day care centres and routine hospital admissions.

#### Training and qualifications required

There are no set entry requirements to become an ambulance care assistant and Patient Transport Service driver. Most employers expect good standards of literacy and numeracy. Some may ask for qualifications such as GCSEs, NVQs or equivalent. Employers look for relevant work experience. It would be an advantage if you have worked with elderly or disabled people, either in paid employment or voluntary work. To drive an ambulance, you need a full, manual driving licence.

#### Expected working hours and salary range

Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales and ambulance care assistants will usually start at bands 2 or 3. Ambulance care assistants 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

An ambulance care assistant and Patient Transport Service driver needs a range of skills and characteristics, including patience, a careful driver, an interest in other people and their concerns, physically fit, good communication and driving skills.

#### Prospects

You could progress to become a team leader or supervisor. You would be in charge of a team of assistants and drivers, responsible for allocating work and drawing up transport schedules. You could take further training to become an emergency care assistant. With more experience, you could apply to train as a paramedic. You would have to pass entrance exams and meet other requirements before being accepted onto a paramedic course.

## Related roles

- Patient Transport Service (PTS) call handler [2]
- Call handler/emergency medical dispatcher [3]
- Paramedic [4]
- Emergency care assistant [5]

- **District nurse** [6]

District nurses make a difference everyday to the lives of the people they visit at home and in residential care homes. They provide increasingly complex care for patients and support for family members.

### Training and qualifications required

You need to be a registered adult, child, mental health or learning disability nurse to apply for a district nursing training programme. The programmes are known as specialist practitioner programmes, are at degree level and usually run over one academic year (32 weeks) full time or part-time equivalent. A level 7 apprenticeship standard in district nursing has been approved for delivery and will offer an alternative route.

### Expected working hours and salary range

District nursing jobs usually start at band 6 but there is opportunity to move up the bands with more experience. District nurses in the NHS will usually work standard hours of 37.5 per week. Most will work weekdays but there might be some weekend work. Terms and conditions can vary for employers outside of the NHS.

### Desirable skills and values

You will need to be adaptable and resourceful, working in a variety of workplaces and without the resources of a hospital at hand. You'll need to be well organised, confident and able to cope in potentially challenging situations. Leadership and management skills are also important as you will supervise and lead a team of community staff nurses and healthcare assistants in the delivery of care.

### Prospects

You could lead a team of nurses and healthcare assistants and with experience you could progress to community sister and community matron. Some nurses decide to do into service management, teaching or clinical academic research.

## Related roles

- Adult nurse [7]
- General practice nurse [8]
- Children's nurse [9]
- Health visitor [10]

- **Assistant practitioner** [11]

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>[12]</sup>
- [Healthcare science assistants and associates](#) <sup>[13]</sup>
- [Experienced paramedic](#) <sup>[14]</sup>
- [Emergency care assistant](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

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### Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/ambulance-care-assistant-and-patient-transport-service-pts-driver> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/patient-transport-service-pts-call-handler> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/emergency-medical-dispatchercall-handler> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/roles-allied-health-professions/paramedic> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/paramedic>

[roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/emergency-care-assistant](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/emergency-care-assistant) [6]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/district-nurse> [7]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/adult-nurse> [8]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/general-practice-nurse> [9]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/childrens-nurse> [10]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health/roles-public-health/health-visitor> [11]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/assistant-practitioner> [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-support-worker/roles-healthcare-support-worker/healthcare-assistant> [13]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/healthcare-science-assistant-and-associate> [14]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/experienced-paramedic>