

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.

• **General surgery** ^[1]

General surgeons perform a wide range of surgery, often in emergency situations, and make up 25% of all consultant surgeons.

Training and qualifications required

You'll need to follow a set pattern of training which usually starts with a five year first degree in medicine and two years of foundation training. You will then undertake two years of core training (CT1–2), followed by 5 years of specialist training (ST3-7). This period of training will include completing your royal college exams. The length of training can vary according to your circumstances.

Expected working hours and salary range

Working hours should not exceed 48 hours a week. The working hours may sometimes extend beyond the normal working day to include early mornings, evenings and weekends. You will also need to be on call. The basic salary ranges from £29,384 to £34,012. Once you start your specialty training as a general surgeon 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 excellent communication skills and be emotionally resilient, have a calm temperament and the ability to work well under pressure. You'll have the capacity to lead multidisciplinary teams and have excellent problem-solving and diagnostic skills. As a x surgeon, you'll have: a high degree of manual dexterity; superb hand-eye co-ordination; excellent vision; visuospatial awareness and the physical stamina to cope with the demands of surgery.

Prospects

There are approximately 2,571 general surgeons working in the NHS in England. You could specialise within general surgery, for example breast surgery, lower gastrointestinal surgery, endocrine surgery, upper gastrointestinal surgery, transplant surgery or advanced trauma surgery.

Related roles

- [Anaesthesia](#) ^[2]
- [Emergency medicine](#) ^[3]
- [Medical oncology](#) ^[4]
- [Experienced paramedic](#) ^[5]

- **[Old age psychiatry](#)** ^[6]

Old age psychiatrists provide specialist and [holistic](#) ^[7] 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.

Related roles

- [General practitioner](#) ^[8]
- [Electrician](#) ^[9]
- [Geriatric medicine](#) ^[10]
- [Intensive care medicine](#) ^[11]

• **Phlebotomist** ^[12]

Phlebotomists are an instrumental part of the NHS team, making sure that the diagnosis of illness is done quickly and safely.

Training and qualifications required

There are no set entry requirements to become a trainee phlebotomist. Employers usually ask for at least two GCSEs or equivalent and may ask for a BTEC or equivalent vocational qualification in health and social care or healthcare. They also often ask for relevant work experience in health or social care, in either paid or voluntary work. There are apprenticeships in healthcare that would give you relevant experience to apply for a trainee phlebotomist position. You could work as a healthcare assistant, and then receive training in phlebotomy so that you can take patient's blood. Phlebotomists are trained on the job and so securing a trainee phlebotomist position is recommended. The training includes theory and practical work.

Expected working hours and salary range

Clinical support staff working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay system. As a phlebotomist, you will typically start on AfC band 2 or 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at band 4. In the NHS, phlebotomists work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. They often work shifts, which could involve nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. Terms and conditions will usually be different for phlebotomists working outside of the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

As a phlebotomist, you'll need to be caring and kind, able to put patients at ease - they might feel anxious about giving blood, willing to be hands-on with patients, able to follow instructions and procedures, able to work in a team but use your 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 further training, you could become a senior phlebotomist taking on more advanced work. You could become a team leader, supervising the work of a team of phlebotomists. With further training, experience and qualifications, you could apply to train as a science or healthcare professional such as a nurse, biomedical scientist or healthcare science practitioner.

Related roles

- **Healthcare assistant** ^[13]
- **Blood sciences** ^[14]
- **Biomedical science** ^[15]
- **Experienced paramedic** ^[5]

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