

Exploring your options

In this section we look at ways in which you can research your options for a career in health.

There's a wide range of jobs available in health. You could work with patients and the public as a [paramedic](#) [1], [doctor](#), [dentist](#) [2], [nurse](#) [3], [physiotherapist](#) [4] or [pharmacist](#) [5], or work in a [public health](#) [6] role to improve or protect people's health.

Or you could join the team to work in healthcare science, management or health [informatics](#) [7] or as a [porter](#) [8] or [secretary](#) [9] in the wider healthcare team.

Careful research into your career options is important. Don't rely on preconceptions. The key is to create a well-rounded picture of the environment in which you'll be working, and think carefully about whether you can see yourself succeeding on that career path.



It's quite natural to have a preconceived idea of what a certain area might be like. But don't make a decision on this basis without further research. It would be unwise to limit yourself and rule out options unnecessarily, and you might be surprised at what some areas have to offer.

Before opting for a particular job role you should have knowledge not just of the work, but the environment in which you'll be working and the training you will need. It is a good idea to consider:

- the nature of the work
- ?who you'll be working with
- study and training required

Find out more in the sections below about each of these areas and the questions you need to ask.

You can begin your career exploration activities by either visiting our [explore role pages](#) [10] or

try our [compare roles tool](#) ^[11].

Nature of the work

- what sort of work will you be doing? Is this a role involving patients, specific departments etc?
- is there a lot of variety in the work, or does it tend to focus on very singular specialised problems?
- what are your shift patterns likely to be, and how often will you be working out of hours?
- are there particular ethical issues you'll be dealing with?

Who you'll be working with

- who will you be working with on a regular basis?
- are your potential colleagues a group of people with similar interests and values?
- do your potential colleagues' interests and values match your own?

Study and training required

- what study and/or training is needed for the job role/s you're interested in?
- does the study and training required fit in with your skills and experience?
- how long will the training typically last?
- what are the opportunities for this option?

Additional ways to explore your options

[Networking](#) ^[12] and [attending careers fairs](#) ^[13] are great ways to interact directly with people to find out about opportunities and to make connections that may be advantageous to you in the future.

You can also use the Internet and social media to help explore your options - click on the links below for more information on these sources.

- Using the internet

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You can begin your role exploration activities by either visiting our [explore role pages](#) ^[10] or by trying our [compare roles tool](#) ^[11]. There are also a number of other resources eg the [National Careers Service](#) ^[14] and [Prospects for graduate careers.](#) ^[15]

Don't forget to check out printed media such as books, journals and newspapers as they often include articles related to specific careers and can provide an appreciation of the current issues faced in that job.

Once you have completed your initial research into the job role(s) online you are interested in, it is likely you will have more questions. Take some time to make a note of your questions before you plan your next step.

There are two main ways of finding out more:

- [attending careers events](#) [13]
- [networking](#) [12]

? [16] You can also try to [gain experience](#) [17] or contact people already in the role. You can also explore the real life real-life stories and films where you can hear from real-life staff about their career and roles.

[Find out more in our explore roles section.](#) [10]

- Using social media

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Organisations are increasingly using Linked-in, Twitter and Facebook as part of their recruitment strategies.

If you use social media:

- make sure you regularly check your social media posts and remove any which could impact on your job search activities
- ensure that your profile is engaging to potential employers and is kept up to date
- make sure that your profiles are consistent across different platforms if you use them, for example, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+
- remember that LinkedIn is generally used by professionals, it gives you the opportunity to join groups and engage in sector specific discussions. All these can help you to develop your visibility to potential employers and allow you to find out more about the job(s) you are interested in

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/health-career-right-you/exploring-your-options>

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/paramedic>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/dentist>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/physiotherapist>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pharmacy/pharmacist>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-public-health>
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Informatics>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/support-services/porter>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/administration/secretarytypist>
- [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles>
- [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/compare-roles>
- [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/developing-your-health-career/networking>
- [13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/planning-your-career/exploring-your-options/careers-fairs>

[14] <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/home>

[15] <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>

[16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning-0/exploring-your-options/networking>

[17] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/gaining-experience>