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Housekeeper

Housekeepers help make sure that hospital wards and other settings are clean, safe and attractive places for patients and staff.

Working life

As a housekeeper, you will lead ward services such as catering, cleaning, equipment and supplies. The work can include:

- talking to and reassuring patients
- ordering non-clinical supplies
- keeping the ward clean and tidy
- serving and clearing away meals
- preparing snacks and drinks
- reporting faults
- clerical and admin tasks
- ordering patient transport
- receiving visitors

With additional training, you may work with patients, taking on some of the duties of a healthcare assistant [1] such as feeding patients, taking and recording blood pressure, temperature.



Pay and benefits

Housekeepers working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC [2]) pay system. You would typically start on AfC [2] band 2. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions such as domestic services team manager or senior housekeeper at band 3. Housekeepers usually work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. They may work shifts, which, in some departments, could involve nights, early starts, evenings and weekends.

Terms and conditions will usually be different for housekeepers working outside of the NHS.

Where will I work?

There are opportunities in any part of a hospital or NHS trust including:



- accident and emergency
- paediatrics or maternity
- medical or surgical wards
- specialised units such as those for people with learning disabilities or mental health needs

Who will I work with?

Housekeepers are part of the ward team. You will work under the direction of the senior nurse or ward manager. You'll work closely with domestic services [3], catering [4] and linen services staff [5] as well as nursing staff [6] and clinical support staff [7].

Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements. Employers expect a good standard of numeracy and literacy. They may ask for GCSEs in English and maths. Employers may also ask for relevant qualifications such as an NVQ in hotel services or health care.

Employers may ask for some experience of hotel work or healthcare which could be from paid or voluntary work.

Skills needed

Housekeepers need to be:

- physically fit for moving, lifting and cleaning
- able to work as part of a team
- friendly and caring
- understanding of patients' needs
- able to take responsibility for their own work
- health and safety aware
- flexible and adaptable
- able to follow instructions and procedures

You'll also need

You will coordinate non-clinical ward services such as catering, cleaning, equipment and supplies.

- good organisational skills
- good communication skills with staff and patients

If you're applying for a role either directly in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services, you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work. Find out more about NHS values. [8]

Training and development

When you start work as a housekeeper you will get the training you need to do the job. This includes an introduction to the department and the ward and its systems and procedures. You will also have training in health and safety and manual handling.

You may be encouraged to take a qualification in housekeeping which could be via an apprenticeship.

Where the role can lead

With experience, housekeepers can become team leaders, supervising the work of other domestic services staff. They can progress to become managers, responsible for a department or area. Housekeepers may be able to move into other areas such as facilities management.

You could move into a clinical support role, such as healthcare assistant or maternity support worker. Or you could apply to train as a nurse or other healthcare professional.

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- Decontamination and sterile services [10]
- Healthcare assistant [11]
- Hotel services management [12]

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Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/healthcare-assistant>
[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/domestic-services/domestic-services-staff> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/domestic-services/catering-manager> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/domestic-services/linen-services-staff> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing>
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