

Plumber

Heating systems and water supply is crucial for a successful NHS. Plumbers in the NHS make sure these are safe and in good working order.

Working life

The NHS relies on water supplies, drainage and heating. They are all essential to keep hospitals and other NHS buildings safe and working efficiently.

As a plumber in the NHS, your work includes:

- planned maintenance
- repairing equipment that is broken or faulty
- testing equipment and systems
- improvements and installations

Who will I work with?

You'll often work alongside other estates services staff such as electricians ^[1], carpenters ^[2] and bricklayers ^[3]. You may travel between sites in an NHS vehicle or your own van.



While plumbers are working inside a building, staff and patients may be there, but they do not have direct contact with healthcare staff or patients.

Plumbers may work for building services contractors which are providing services to the NHS.

Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements but employers expect plumbers to have a qualification and experience in plumbing and/or heating and ventilation.

To train as a plumber, you usually need at least three GCSEs (or equivalent) including maths, English and science. Employers may ask for some experience in construction or other practical work. An apprenticeship ^[4]in an estates support role can provide this.

Employers may ask for a driving licence.

You'll often work alongside other estates services staff such as electricians, carpenters and bricklayers

Skills needed

Plumbers need to be

- interested in practical work and repairs
- able to follow technical instructions
- accurate and methodical
- health and safety aware
- willing to work at heights where necessary
- able to use tools
- good manual (hand) skills
- organisational skills
- time management skills

Training and development

When you start as a trainee plumber, your training will include

- health and safety
- how to use the tools and equipment
- all aspects of plumbing, drainage and heating work

You will be expected to study for qualifications such as NVQs. You may also be encouraged to become multi-skilled by training in, for example, painting and decorating or tiling.

Plumbers can join the Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering ^[5] and apply for chartered status.

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Pay and conditions

Estates staff working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) ^[6] pay system. As an estates support worker, you would typically start on AfC ^[7] band 2. As a qualified plumber, you will typically start on AfC ^[7] band 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at bands 4 and above.

Plumbers in the NHS work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. The job may involve shifts including early starts, evenings and weekends. Plumbers may be part of an on-call rota for emergency cover.

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

- ## Where the role can lead

Once fully qualified and with experience, a plumber can become a team leader, supervising the work of others. With further experience you could progress to manager, responsible for maintenance and repair services in a hospital, area or trust.

Plumbers may be able to move into other estates services roles ^[8] They can apply to train as engineers. ^[9]

There are opportunities outside the NHS.

Some plumbers become self-employed by setting up a business, either on their own or with one or more colleagues.

- ## Job market and vacancies

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 ^[10].

Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs ^[11]. Some of the current vacancies are below.

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Plumber

Bristol, BS2 8HW

Salary:

£23949.00 to £26282.00 a year pa pro rata (+ RRP £3560.17)

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Plumber job (opens in a new window) ^[12]

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Plumber

Kettering, NN15 7PW

Salary:

£23949.00 to £26282.00 a year pa pro rata

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Plumber job (opens in a new window) ^[13]

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Maintenance Plumber

Middlesbrough, TS5 4EE

Salary:

£23949.00 to £26282.00 a year per annum

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Maintenance Plumber job (opens in a new window) ^[14]

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Maintenance Plumber

Durham, DH1 5RD

Salary:

£23949.00 to £26282.00 a year per annum

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Maintenance Plumber job (opens in a new window) ^[15]

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Maintenance Plumber

Prestwich, M25 3BL

Salary:

£23949.00 to £26282.00 a year per annum pro rata

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Maintenance Plumber job (opens in a new window) ^[16]

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Maintenance Plumber

Redhill, RH1 5RH

Salary:

£25147.00 to £27597.00 a year per annum including high cost allowance

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Maintenance Plumber job (opens in a new window) ^[17]

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Further information

- Association of Plumbing and Heating Contractors ^[18]
- Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering ^[19]
- Construction Industry Training Board ^[20]

Other roles that may interest you

- Painter and decorator ^[21]
- Carpenter/joiner ^[22]
- Tiler ^[23]
- Estates technician ^[24]

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/plumber>

Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services/electrician>

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services/carpenterjoiner>

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services/bricklayer>

[4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-cadet-schemes>

- [5] <http://www.ciphe.org.uk/>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services/engineer>
- [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>
- [11] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>
- [12] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/917576972>
- [13] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/917590154>
- [14] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/917560474>
- [15] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/917549654>
- [16] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/917545776>
- [17] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/917569718>
- [18] <http://www.aphc.co.uk>
- [19] <http://www.ciphe.org.uk>
- [20] <http://www.citb.co.uk>
- [21] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/painter-and-decorator>
- [22] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/carpenterjoiner>
- [23] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/tiler>
- [24] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/estates-technician>