

Theatre support worker

Theatre support workers are the glue keeping the surgical team together. They make sure each member of the team is able to do their job effectively.

Working life

Theatre support staff also have an important role in making sure patients, who may be anxious about going into the operating theatre, feel as calm and comfortable as possible.



As a member of the theatre support staff, you'll also:



- move patients on trolleys
- reassure family members
- prepare patients for anaesthetic
- set out instruments and equipment ready for surgery
- make sure the department has stocks of items needed
- clean and tidy theatre areas after surgery
- dispose of waste

Who will I work with?

You'll work with other members of the theatre team, including theatre nurses [1], anaesthetists [2], surgeons [3], operating department practitioners [4], and administrative staff [5]. Your work will include some aspects of the role done by porters [6], operating department practitioners and theatre nurses.

Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements. Employers expect a good standard of numeracy and literacy and may ask for GCSEs (or equivalent) in English and maths. Theatre support workers have experience of healthcare. Most have worked in the NHS in another healthcare role such as healthcare assistant [7] or other clinical support role. [8] You could gain experience of healthcare by securing a healthcare-related apprenticeship, and then applying for a permanent position as a healthcare assistant or other clinical support role.

Skills and personal characteristics

Theatre support workers need to be:

An important part of the work is reassuring patients, who may be anxious about going into the operating theatre.

- willing to be in operating theatre areas during surgery
- calm and reassuring
- health and safety aware
- able to follow procedures
- part of a team but responsible for their own work

You'll also need:

- organisational skills

- communication skills
- good team working skills

Training and development

When you start as a theatre support worker you will be trained. Your training will include:

- health and safety
- infection control
- an introduction to the department and its systems and procedures

You will be encouraged to take relevant vocational qualifications. Apprenticeships in Perioperative [9] Support at Intermediate, Advanced and Higher levels may be available.

- Expand / collapse
Pay and conditions

Clinical support staff in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) [10] pay system. As a member of the theatre support staff, you will typically start on AfC [11] band 2 or 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at band 4.

Theatre support staff work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. Some may work shifts including early starts, evenings and weekends.

Terms and conditions will usually be different for clinical support staff working outside of the NHS.

- Expand / collapse
Where the role can lead

With experience, a theatre support worker can become a senior theatre support worker, supervising the work of a team.

Theatre support workers can apply for other roles in the wider healthcare team such as healthcare assistant [7]. With the qualifications necessary for university study, they can also apply to train as a theatre nurse [1], operating department practitioner [12] or other healthcare professional.

- Expand / collapse
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 [13].

Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [14]. Some of the current vacancies are below.

- [View Vacancy \[15\]](#)

Theatre Support Worker

Tunbridge Wells, TN2 4QJ

- **Salary:**

£18005.00 to £19337.00 a year

- **Type:**

Permanent

- **Employer:**

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust

- [View Vacancy](#)
- [View Vacancy \[16\]](#)

Theatre Support Worker - Ophthalmics

Nottingham, NG7 2UH

- **Salary:**

Depending on experience

- **Type:**

Permanent

- **Employer:**

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

- [View Vacancy](#)
- [View Vacancy \[17\]](#)

Theatre Assistant Practitioner - Burns and Plastics

Nottingham, NG7 2UH

- **Salary:**

Depending on experience

- **Type:**

Permanent

- **Employer:**

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

- [View Vacancy](#)
- [View Vacancy \[18\]](#)

Theatre Porter/Healthcare Assistant - The Riverside Clinic

North West London, TW8 9DR

- **Salary:**

£22,880

- **Type:**

Permanent

- **Employer:**

Healthshare

- [View Vacancy](#)

- Further information

For further information about working in theatres, contact your local hospital or visit the NHS Jobs website [19] to search for vacancies and view job descriptions.

Other roles that may interest you

- [Operating department practitioner \[20\]](#)
- [Porter \[21\]](#)
- [Experienced paramedic \[22\]](#)
- [Emergency care assistant \[23\]](#)

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/theatre-support-worker>

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/theatre-nurse>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/anaesthesia>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/surgery>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/operating-department-practice>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/administration>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/support-services/porter>
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/healthcare-assistant>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Perioperative>
- [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
- [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC>
- [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/operating-department-practice/operating-department-practitioner>
- [13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>
- [14] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>
- [15] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916406156>
- [16] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916415674>
- [17] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916412150>
- [18] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916387588>
- [19] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk>
- [20] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/operating-department-practitioner>
- [21] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/support-services/porter>
- [22] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/experienced-paramedic>
- [23] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/emergency-care-assistant>