

Who works for the NHS?

See a breakdown of the different role categories within the NHS, information about entry routes and a snapshot of the roles available.

Entry routes

There are lots of different ways to get into an NHS role.

School leavers

If you are a school leaver there are opportunities in [administration](#) ^[1], [domestic services](#) ^[2], [portering](#) ^[3], [clinical support work](#) ^[4] and many others. Some of these require few or no GCSEs, others will need high-grade GCSEs or A-levels.

Apprenticeships

There are also [apprenticeships](#) ^[5] in many career areas.

Support

Anyone joining the NHS in these roles will be supported to extend their role and gain further qualifications.

Higher education

Many NHS careers require a higher education qualification, in an area such as health, science or social care. For clinical roles, a specific degree or diploma course provides the usual entry route. You can find some of the higher education courses available on our [course finder](#) ^[6].

Find out more

You can find specific details on entry routes on the individual role pages. And there are lots of tips on planning your career in our [Career planning section](#) ^[7].



Roles within the NHS are split into 14 categories as follows.

Allied health professions ^[8]

As key members of today's healthcare team, allied health professionals work closely with patients, often on a one-to-one basis, helping with rehabilitation and providing treatment that helps transform people's lives.

Ambulance service team ^[9]

You could be part of an emergency response crew, handle 999 calls in a control room, or provide vital non-emergency transport for patients.

Dental team ^[10]

If you're interested in diagnosing and treating a range of problems affecting the mouth, teeth and gums and like the idea of working with people, doing a job that's respected, and which offers flexibility and security, a career with the dental team could be right for you.

Doctors ^[11]

If you have the passion to improve people's lives and the determination to reach the highest standards, there's a wide range of career opportunities open to you within medicine. Becoming a doctor isn't an easy option, it takes years of study and hard work, but if you like helping people there are few more rewarding or respected careers.

Health informatics ^[12]

Health [informatics](#) ^[13] is one of the fastest growing areas within healthcare. To put it simply — health [informatics](#) ^[13] is about getting the right information to the right person at the right time. You could be introducing electronic health records for every person in the country or exploring patient data to identify trends in disease and treatment.

Healthcare science ^[11]

Whether it's helping patients with hearing problems, analysing tissue samples, or researching how results from the [human genome project](#) ^[14] can be translated into new treatments — healthcare scientists and technicians help to save lives and improve care for millions of patients.

Management ^[11]

Managers are a key part of the NHS. Whether they are managing the talented, hardworking staff, controlling the finance or providing the equipment, buildings and services, managers are crucial to the delivery of effective healthcare.

Midwifery ^[15]

Being a midwife is much more than delivering babies. You'd be involved in antenatal and postnatal care, in counselling, in offering support and education, and help families prepare for parenthood.

Nursing ^[16]

If you want to work in an interesting, rewarding and challenging environment, a career in nursing will give you plenty of scope to do exactly that. Nurses work in every sort of health setting — from accident and emergency, to patients' homes — with people of all ages and backgrounds.

Pharmacy ^[17]

Interested in science and how medicines help patients manage their condition? Pharmacists are experts in medicines and work with technicians and assistants in both hospital and community settings.

Medical associate professions [18]

The NHS has seen the emergence of four new professional roles working within multi-professional teams as part of the continuing drive to provide safe, accessible and high-quality care for patients.

Psychological professions [19]

One in four people will suffer from a mental illness at some point in their lives. Psychological professionals will provide, care and support, and help people overcome their difficulties through counselling, therapy and other ways.

Public health [20]

Public health is about influencing people's lifestyles or aspects of the environment in which they live with the aim of preventing them from becoming unhealthy or ill, or of improving their health and wellbeing. Some of these roles are in the NHS, but many are found in other organisations.

Wider healthcare team [11]

You could design, construct and maintain NHS buildings, organise catering, supply linen, clean the wards, book appointments. Every role in the wider healthcare team has one thing in common — they are essential to running the NHS.

Not sure which role would suit you?

- [find out more about the types of people we need](#) [21]
- [explore and compare roles](#) [11]
- [try our 'Find your career in health' tool and get some suggestions based on the way you answer some questions about work](#) [22]

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-nhs/who-works-nhs>

Links

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

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

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

[4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff>

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

[6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/looking-course>

- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning>
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- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team>
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- [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/health-informatics>
- [13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Informatics>
- [14] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Human_Genome_Project
- [15] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/midwifery>
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- [21] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/who-do-we-need>
- [22] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/career-tools>