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Forensic psychiatry

Forensic psychiatrists treat people with mental health problems who are in prison, a secure hospital or the wider community.

It's a highly specialised role and you'll need a sophisticated understanding of the links between mental health and the law.

Life as a forensic psychiatrist

You'll assess the risk of harm to others and the patient themselves. This is a huge responsibility and will require you to contribute to a treatment plan for the management of each patient. You'll be part of a forensic mental health team and your job will be to ensure the appropriate and regular review of a patient's assessment and strategy.

In this demanding and diverse role, you'll provide specialist advice to the courts, the probation service, the prison service and other psychiatric colleagues. You'll need to prepare reports for mental health review tribunals, hospital managers' hearings, other practitioners and criminal justice agencies.

You'll need a highly developed understanding of multidisciplinary clinical and inter-agency skills. Liaising and listening to other psychiatric experts will be a daily part of your job.

When guiding colleagues in the care of patients deemed to be a risk to others, you'll be expected to provide advice on:

- risk of harm to others, including use of structured risk assessment/professional judgement tools
- risk management
- pharmacological and psychological treatment approaches to violent behaviours associated with mental disorders
- psychodynamic formulation of the case, including psychotherapeutic strategy
- therapeutic use of security

You'll need a comprehensive knowledge of the relevant legislation and criminal, civil and case law as you'll work closely with the criminal justice agencies and the courts. Your patients will usually be referred from the criminal justice system or occasionally from other health services if a patient is a perceived risk.

The majority of your patients will be subject to legal restrictions, so most of your time will be spent working in a secure hospital, prison or in the community delivering specialist services.

You'll be required to appear in courts as an expert witness in cases that can involve homicide, serious violence and sexual offences. Your expertise will need to include:

- defendant's fitness to plead and fitness to stand trial
- capacity to form intent
- advice to the courts on the available psychiatric defences
- appropriateness and circumstances required for an individual's admission to hospital for assessment
- appropriateness of a mental health disposal at the time of sentencing
- nature of a particular mental disorder and link to future risks
- prognosis and availability of 'appropriate treatment'
- level of security required to treat a patient and manage risk

How much can I earn?

You'll first earn a salary when you start your <u>foundation training</u> [1] after medical school. Find out details of current salary ranges for foundation and specialty training, <u>SAS doctors</u> [2] and consultants on the 'Pay for doctors' [3] page.

How about the benefits?

- make a difference
- flexible and part-time working
- high income early in your career
- work anywhere in the world
- excellent pension scheme
- · good holiday entitlement
- NHS discounts in shops and restaurants

Must-have skills

- excellent communication skills to manage a wide range of relationships with colleagues, and patients and their families
- emotional resilience, a calm temperament and the ability to work well under pressure
- teamwork and the capacity to lead multidisciplinary teams
- problem-solving and diagnostic skills
- outstanding organisational ability and effective decision-making skills
- first-class time and resource management for the benefit of patients

Entry requirements

Your first step is medical school. Typically, you'll need excellent GCSEs and three A or A* passes at A level including chemistry for a five-year undergraduate degree in medicine. Many medical schools also ask for biology and others may require maths or physics.

If you already have a degree, you could study for a four-year postgraduate degree in medicine.

You'll need to pass an interview and admissions test. You'll be asked to show how you demonstrate the NHS values such as compassion and respect.

Some medical schools look to recruit a mix of students from different backgrounds and geographical areas, so your educational and economic background and family circumstances could be considered as part of your application.

"It's so rewarding to see people recover from the most fractured state of mental health. Changes can be subtle and take time, but they do happen. We don't focus solely on disease – psychiatry is a holistic [4] specialty."

Read Brad's story [5].

What are my chances of starting a career as a forensic psychiatrist?

There are currently 333 consultant forensic psychiatrists working in the NHS in England. In 2020, there were 55 applications for 34 specialty training places.

How to become a forensic psychiatrist

After medical school, you'll join the paid two-year <u>foundation programme</u> [6] where you'll work in six placements in different settings.

After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid <u>specialty training</u> [7] to become a forensic psychiatrist, which will take a minimum of six years.

You may be able to train part time, for example for health reasons or if you have family or caring responsibilities.

Where a career as a forensic psychiatrist can take you

You'll have the opportunity to specialise in:

- adolescent forensic psychiatry
- forensic learning disability psychiatry
- forensic psychotherapy

There's also a growing need for specialists in old-age forensic psychiatry and substance misuse.

You'll also teach medical students or postgraduate students in training and get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector.

Live vacancies

Find a vacancy

Enter your location or postcode

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Consultant Psychiatrist - Forensic Psychiatry

Bristol, BS16 1EG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist - Forensic Psychiatry job

(opens in a new window) [8]

Forensic Psychiatrist

Wellington, TA21 9FF

Salary:

£80400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Elysium Healthcare

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Psychiatrist job (opens in a new window) [9]

Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry

Conwy, LL30 1LA

Salary:

£91722.00 to £119079.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry job (opens in a new window) [10]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist

Mansfield, NG19 7AE

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist job (opens in a new window) [11]

Specialty Doctor in Forensic Psychiatry

Southampton, SO40 2RZ

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

<u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in Forensic Psychiatry job (opens in a new window)</u> [12]

Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry - Ravenswood

Fareham, PO17 5NA

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry - Ravenswood job (opens in a new window) [13]

Specialty Doctor - Forensic Psychiatry - Preston

Goosnargh, PR3 2JH

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor - Forensic Psychiatry - Preston job

(opens in a new window) [14]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist - Woodhill

Milton Keynes, MK4 4DJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist - Woodhill job (opens in a new window) [15]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist - F.I.N.D.

9 Springfield Drive, SW17 0YF

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

South West London and St Georges Mental Health NHS Trust

<u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist - F.I.N.D. job (opens in a new window)</u> [16]

Junior Clinical Fellow in Forensic Psychiatry

London, N4 2ES

Salary:

£49909.00 to £61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East London NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Junior Clinical Fellow in Forensic Psychiatry job (opens in a new window) [17]

Junior Clinical Fellow in Forensic Psychiatry

London, N4 2ES

Salary:

£49909.00 to £61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East London NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Junior Clinical Fellow in Forensic Psychiatry job (opens in a new window) [18]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist- Hackney_Hoxton Ward

London, N4 2ES

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East London NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist- Hackney_Hoxton Ward job (opens in a new window) [19]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist & Clinical Director

Rotherham, S63 7TQ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist & Clinical Director job (opens in a new window) [20]

o Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry - Southfield Low Secure

Southampton, SO40 2RZ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

<u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry - Southfield Low</u>

<u>Secure job (opens in a new window)</u> [21]

Adult/Forensic Consultant Psychiatrist

Chichester, PO19 6GS

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Adult/Forensic Consultant Psychiatrist job (opens in a new window) [22]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist-Tower Hamlets_Woodberry Ward

London, N4 2ES

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East London NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist-Tower

Hamlets_Woodberry Ward job (opens in a new window) [23]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist- Waltham Forest_Loxford Ward

London, N4 2ES

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East London NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist- Waltham

Forest_Loxford Ward job (opens in a new window) [24]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist/Practitioner MPAC - Ash Ward

Bridgwater, TA6 5LX

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist/Practitioner MPAC - Ash Ward job (opens in a new window) [25]

Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist - Rathbone Low Secure Unit

Liverpool, L13 4AW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist - Rathbone Low Secure Unit job (opens in a new window) [26]

Consultant Psychiatrist - Community Forensic Team (FIND)

Dawlish, EX7 0NR

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Devon Partnership NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist - Community Forensic Team (FIND) job (opens in a new window) [27]

Consultant Psychiatrist (Community Forensic Learning Disabilities)

Warrington, WA2 8WA

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist (Community Forensic Learning Disabilities) job (opens in a new window) [28]

Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disabilities-Forensic & Autism

Marston Green, B37 7HL

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual DisabilitiesForensic & Autism job (opens in a new window) [29]

Clinical/Counselling/Forensic Psychologist - Forensic Psychologis

Wickford, Essex, SS11 7FE

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

<u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical/Counselling/Forensic Psychologist - Forensic Psychologist - For</u>

Forensic Psychologist

York, LN3 0AB

Salary:

£58000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Care & Custody - A Mitie Company

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Psychologist job (opens in a new window) [31]

Clinical/Forensic Psychologist

Telford, Shropshire, TF3 4JL

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical/Forensic Psychologist job (opens in a new window) [32]

Forensic Administrator - HMP Huntercombe

Henley-On-Thames, RG9 5SG

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxford Health NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Administrator - HMP Huntercombe job (opens in a new window) [33]

Specialist Forensic Recovery Worker

Stafford, ST16 3AT

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Inclusion

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Forensic Recovery Worker job (opens in a new window) [34]

Clinical/Forensic/Counselling Psychologist

Bolton, BL4 0JL

Salary:

£55000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

ABL Health Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical/Forensic/Counselling Psychologist job (opens in a new window) [35]

Specialist Community Forensic Practitioner

Billericay, CM12 9NW

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Secondment

Employer:

Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

<u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Community Forensic Practitioner job (opens in a new window)</u> [36]

Psychologist - Clinical / Forensic / Counselling

London and South East, SG1 4YS

Salary:

£55000.00 to £59000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cygnet Health Care

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Psychologist - Clinical / Forensic / Counselling job (opens in a new window) [37]

Clinical/Forensic/Counselling Psychologist

Boston, PE22 0QX

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical/Forensic/Counselling Psychologist job (opens in a new window) [38]

Forensic Healthcare Professional - Worcester

Worcester, WR1 3QX Nuneaton, CV114JU

Salary:

£41190.24

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Partnering Health Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Healthcare Professional - Worcester job (opens in a new window) [39]

Forensic Community Psychiatric Nurse

Hackney, London, E9 7TA

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East London NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Community Psychiatric Nurse job (opens in a new window) [40]

Forensic healthcare Professional - Scarborough

Scarborough, YO12 7AD

Salary:

£38450.00 to £43465.50

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Partnering Health Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic healthcare Professional - Scarborough job (opens in a new window) [41]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Oxfordshire

Abingdon, OX14 1AU

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Oxfordshire job (opens in a new window) [42]

Forensic Occupational Therapy Team Leader

Llanfairfechan, LL33 0HH

Salary:

£46840.00 to £53602.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Occupational Therapy Team Leader job (opens in a new window) [43]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Oxfordshire

Banbury, OX16 2AE

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Oxfordshire job (opens in a new window) [44]

Forensic Secure Inpatient Services Manager

Hellingly, BN27 4ER

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Secure Inpatient Services Manager job (opens in a new window) [45]

Forensic Inpatient Social Worker - Oxford

Oxford, OX4 4XN

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Oxford Health NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Inpatient Social Worker - Oxford job (opens in a new window) [46]

Principal Clinical/Forensic/Counselling Psychologist

Dudley/Walsall, DY1 2LZ

Salary:

£62215.00 to £72293.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

<u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Principal Clinical/Forensic/Counselling Psychologist</u>
<u>job (opens in a new window)</u> [47]

Forensic Custody Nurse or Paramedic

Monsall, M40 5BP

Salary:

£41000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Care & Custody - A Mitie Company

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Custody Nurse or Paramedic job (opens in a new window) [48]

Forensic Custody Nurse or Paramedic

Liverpool, L3 3HJ

Salary:

£41000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Care & Custody - A Mitie Company

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Custody Nurse or Paramedic job (opens in a new window) [49]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Berkshire

Reading, RG6 4PS

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Berkshire job (opens in a new window) [50]

o Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Berkshire

Maidenhead, SL6 8LP

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Berkshire job (opens in a new window) [51]

Forensic Custody Nurse or Paramedic

Winsford, CW7 2UA

Salary:

£41000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Care & Custody - A Mitie Company

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Custody Nurse or Paramedic job (opens in a new window) [52]

Band 8a Clinical/Forensic Psychologist - Bristol

Bristol, BS16 1EG

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

<u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 8a Clinical/Forensic Psychologist - Bristol job</u>

<u>(opens in a new window)</u> [53]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Abingdon - Custody

Abingdon, OX14 1AU

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Abingdon - Custody job (opens in a new window) [54]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Staines - Custody

Staines, TW18 4LQ

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Staines - Custody job (opens in a new window) [55]

Senior Forensic Occupational Therapist - Littlemore - Oxford

Oxford, OX4 4XN

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxford Health NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Forensic Occupational Therapist - Littlemore - Oxford job (opens in a new window) [56]

Principal Clinical or Forensic Psychologist DBT

Northampton, NN1 5DG

Salary:

£62588.00 to £74165.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

St Andrew's Healthcare

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Principal Clinical or Forensic Psychologist DBT job (opens in a new window) [57]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Guildford - Custody

Guildford, GU1 4QS

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Guildford - Custody job (opens in a new window) [58]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Maidenhead- Custody

Maidenhead, SL6 8LP

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Maidenhead- Custody job (opens in a new window) [59]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Salfords - Custody

Redhill, RH1 5DY

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Salfords - Custody job (opens in a new window) [60]

Advanced Occupational Therapist Forensic Outreach Liaison Service

Wakefield, WF1 3SP

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Advanced Occupational Therapist Forensic Outreach Liaison Service job (opens in a new window) [61]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Carlisle Custody Suite

Carlisle, CA1 3NQ

Salary:

£41673.00 to £41673.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Carlisle Custody Suite job (opens in a new window) [62]

BANK Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Surrey Custody

Staines, TW18 4LQ

Salary:

£20.00 to £20.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for BANK Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Surrey Custody job (opens in a new window) [63]

o Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Barrow Custody Suite

Barrow-In-Furness, LA14 2UE

Salary:

£41673.00 to £41673.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Barrow Custody Suite job (opens in a new window) [64]

o BANK Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Surrey Custody

Guildford, GU1 4QS

Salary:

£20.00 to £20.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for BANK Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Surrey Custody job (opens in a new window) [65]

Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Milton Keynes- Custody

Milton Keynes, MK9 2DS

Salary:

£43798.00 to £43798.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Milton Keynes-Custody job (opens in a new window) [66]

BANK Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Thames Valley

Banbury, OX16 2AE

Salary:

£19.42

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Mountain Healthcare Ltd

Apply now on NHS Jobs for BANK Forensic Nurse or Paramedic - Thames Valley job (opens in a new window) [67]

Further information

These organisations have further information about being a forensic psychiatrist, particularly as your career progresses. Take a look.

The Forensic Psychiatry Research Society [68]

General Medical Council [69]

Royal College of Psychiatrists [70]

And hear from people working in forensic psychiatry.

Sparking an interest in psychiatry (RCPsych) [71]

Short film about the important and often misunderstood work that takes place at Broadmoor Hospital (WLMH) [72]

Other roles that may interest you

- General practitioner [73]
- Neurologist [74]
- General psychiatry [75]
- Medical psychotherapy [76]

Source URL: https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/psychiatry/forensic-psychiatry

Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation_training[2]

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https://foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/ [7] https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/ [8]

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