

# Psychiatry of intellectual disability (PID)

Psychiatrists working in intellectual disability assess and treat people with intellectual or learning disabilities.

This can include the assessment and management of neurodevelopmental disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity, autism spectrum disorder and epilepsy.



## Life as an intellectual disability psychiatrist

People with intellectual disability (sometimes called learning disability) are more likely to have mental health problems so you'll provide patient-centric care to improve their quality of life.

Your patients will usually be adults aged over 18 years as younger patients tend to be seen by a child and adolescent psychiatrist.

You'll be required to adopt a [holistic](#) <sup>[1]</sup> approach as patients with intellectual disability often have physical conditions such as cerebral palsy or epilepsy.

Patients often present non-specifically. For example, they demonstrate withdrawal or a change in behaviour. You'll need to investigate and establish the cause in your diagnosis.

Common mental health conditions you'll treat include:

- anxiety
- bipolar disorder
- depression
- obsessive compulsive disorder
- schizophrenia

You'll work as part of a multidisciplinary team and be expected to collaborate with colleagues and a patient's family and carers.

Psychiatry is an interesting academic discipline, whether you are interested in the biological basis of mental health problems (e.g. dementia in people with Down's syndrome, behavioural phenotypes of genetic disorders), or the development of innovative service models or forensic

aspects of intellectual disability.

## How much can I earn?

You'll first earn a salary when you start your [foundation training](#) <sup>[2]</sup> after medical school. Find out details of current salary ranges for foundation and specialty training, [SAS doctors](#) <sup>[3]</sup> and consultants on the '[Pay for doctors](#)' <sup>[4]</sup> 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

In addition, intellectual disability psychiatrists need to demonstrate:

- empathy and compassion and the ability to treat others with understanding and respect
- respect for people with intellectual disabilities and the contribution they make to society
- patience
- excellent listening skills
- willingness to build relationships with their 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.

## What are my chances of starting a career in psychiatry of intellectual disability?

In 2021, there were 254 consultants in psychiatry of intellectual disability working in the NHS in England. In 2020, there were 30 applications for 52 training places.

## How to become an intellectual disability psychiatrist

After medical school, you'll join the paid two-year [foundation programme](#) <sup>[5]</sup> where you'll work in six placements in different settings.

After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid [specialty training](#) <sup>[6]</sup> to become an intellectual disability 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 an intellectual disability psychiatrist can take you

You could:

- specialise or conduct research
- teach medical students or postgraduate students in training
- get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector

### • **Live vacancies**

## Find a vacancy

Enter your location or postcode

Show results within

Search

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disabilities - Lincoln**

Lincoln, LN1 1FS

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disabilities - Lincoln job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[7]</sup>

- **Consultant in Psychiatry for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities**

Pembroke Dock, SA72 6DY

Salary:

£110240.00 to £160951.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hywel Dda University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Psychiatry for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disability-Little Plumstead**

Norfolk, NR13 5EW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disability-Little Plumstead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

- **Consultant Psychiatrist, Intellectual Disability - Pennine Lancashire**

Darwen, BB3 1AY

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust  
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist, Intellectual Disability - Pennine Lancashire job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Psychiatrist Intellectual Disability-Little Plumstead**

Norfolk, NR13 5EW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Psychiatrist Intellectual Disability-Little Plumstead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

- **Clinical Director-Intellectual Disability. MaudsleyHealth Hospital UAE**

London, SE5 8AZ

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Director-Intellectual Disability. MaudsleyHealth Hospital UAE job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

- **Consultant Learning Disability Psychiatrist**

Swansea, SA6 6AH

Salary:

£110240.00 to £160951.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Swansea Bay University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Learning Disability Psychiatrist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in CAMHS Learning Disabilities**

Worcester, WR5 1JR

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in CAMHS Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

- **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 \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

- **COMMUNITY CAMHS LEARNING DISABILITY CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRIST**

Canterbury, CT2 8JY

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

NELFT North East London Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for COMMUNITY CAMHS LEARNING DISABILITY CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRIST job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Adult Learning Disability**

Northallerton, DL6 2FG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Adult Learning Disability job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

- **Community Physiotherapist (Learning Disabilities)**

Derby/Derbyshire, DE1 2SX

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Community Physiotherapist \(Learning Disabilities\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[18]</sup>

- **Support Worker (Learning Disability)**

Wallsend, NE28 7PD

Salary:

£24937.00 to £26598.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Support Worker \(Learning Disability\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

- **Community Practitioner - Learning Disability**

Wallsend, NE28 7PD

Salary:

£38682.00 to £46580.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Community Practitioner - Learning Disability job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[20]</sup>

- **Consultant in Learning Disabilities - IOW**

Sandown, PO36 9EA

Salary:

£99532.00 to £131964.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Learning Disabilities - IOW job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[21]</sup>

- **Community Learning Disability Team Manager**

Scunthorpe, DN16 1AL

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHSFT

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Community Learning Disability Team Manager job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[22]</sup>

- **Associate Practitioner (Learning Disability Partnership)**

Papworth Everard, CB23 3AB

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Associate Practitioner \(Learning Disability Partnership\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[23]</sup>

- **Associate Practitioner (Learning Disability Partnership)**

Ely, CB6 1DN

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Associate Practitioner \(Learning Disability Partnership\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[24]</sup>

- **Specialist Clinician Remote Care (Learning Disability)**

National Role - to be confirmed on interview, NP44 1PX

Salary:

£54550.00 to £61412.00

Type:

Permanent



Employer:

Welsh Ambulance NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Clinician Remote Care \(Learning Disability\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[25]</sup>

- **Occupational Therapist - Specialist Practitioner Learning Disabilities**

Truro, TR15 3QE

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Occupational Therapist - Specialist Practitioner Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[26]</sup>

- **Community Adult Learning Disability Physiotherapy Assistant**

Ewloe, Flintshire, CH5 3FF

Salary:

£26928.00 to £29551.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Community Adult Learning Disability Physiotherapy Assistant job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[27]</sup>

- **Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities Professional Lead**

Swindon, SN25 4AN

Salary:

£62215.00 to £72293.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCRG Care Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities Professional Lead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[28]</sup>

- **Band 8A Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities**

Devizes, SN10 5DS

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCRG Care Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 8A Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[29]</sup>

- **Band 6 Specialist Learning Disability Physiotherapist**

Swindon, SN25 4AN

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCRG Care Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 6 Specialist Learning Disability Physiotherapist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[30]</sup>

- **Band 8A Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities**

Swindon, SN25 4AN

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCRG Care Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 8A Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[31]</sup>

- **Learning Disabilities Support Workers (Days Only)**

Huddersfield, HD1 4HR

Salary:

£26208.00 to £27248.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cygnnet Health Care

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Learning Disabilities Support Workers \(Days Only\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[32]</sup>

- **Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities Professional Lead**

Devizes, SN10 5DS

Salary:

£62215.00 to £72293.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCRG Care Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities Professional Lead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[33]</sup>

- **Health Care Support Worker - Learning Disabilities**

Preston, PR3 2JH

Salary:

£24625.00 to £25674.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Health Care Support Worker - Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[34]</sup>

- **Nursing Assistant - Learning Disability & Autism inpatient services**

Warrington, WA2 9TN

Salary:

£24625.00 to £25674.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Nursing Assistant - Learning Disability & Autism inpatient services job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[35]</sup>

- **Trust Locum Specialty Doctor in Learning Disability**

Hyde, Tameside, SK14 8HW

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Pennine Care NHS FT

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Trust Locum Specialty Doctor in Learning Disability job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[36]</sup>

- **Bank Support Worker, Learning Disabilities, Complex Care**

Hereford, HR1 2PJ

Salary:

£16.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Airmid Staffing Ltd

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Bank Support Worker, Learning Disabilities, Complex Care job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[37]</sup>

- **Band 8a Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities & Autism**

Swindon, SN25 4AN

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCRG Care Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 8a Clinical Psychologist - Learning Disabilities & Autism job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[38]</sup>

- **Divisional General Manager, Mental Health & Learning Disabilities**

Caerleon, NP18 3XQ

Salary:

£89491.00 to £103203.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Divisional General Manager, Mental Health & Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[39]</sup>

- **Further information**

The [Royal College of Psychiatrists](#) <sup>[40]</sup> has further information about being a psychiatrist of intellectual disability, particularly as your career progresses. Take a look.

## Other roles that may interest you

- [General practitioner](#) [41]
- [Old age psychiatry](#) [42]
- [Liaison psychiatry](#) [43]
- [Knowledge and library services](#) [44]

---

**Source URL:**<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/psychiatry/psychiatry-intellectual-disability>

### Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Holistic> [2]  
[https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation\\_training](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation_training) [3]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/career-opportunities-doctors/sas-doctors> [4]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/pay-doctors> [5]  
<https://foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/> [6] <https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/> [7]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9274-25-0305> [8]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/H9100-25-0791> [9]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9367-25-0528> [10]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9351-25-0636> [11]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9367-25-0526> [12]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9334-25-0629> [13]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/H9130-25-0597> [14]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9798-1500> [15]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9350-25-0301> [16]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9395-25-0667> [17]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9346-LD-25M2> [18]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9383-25-0376> [19]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9319-25-0667> [20]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9319-25-0666> [21]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9348-25-1689> [22]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9376-25-0433> [23]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9310-25-0624> [24]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9310-25-0623> [25]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9020-25-0143> [26]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9201-25-0670> [27]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/H9050-25-2031> [28]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0279-25-1172> [29]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0279-25-1192> [30]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0279-25-1311> [31]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0279-25-1166> [32]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0233-25-1385> [33]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0279-25-1195> [34]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9351-25-0645> [35]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9350-25-0856> [36]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9311-25-0518> [37]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/L0125-25-0001> [38]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/E0279-25-1163> [39]  
<https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/H9040-25-1026> [40] <https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/become-a-psychiatrist/choose-psychiatry/what-is-psychiatry/types-of-psychiatrist/intellectual-disability> [41]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/general-practitioner> [42]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/psychiatry/old-age-psychiatry> [43]  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/psychiatry/liaison-psychiatry> [44]

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/health-informatics/roles-health-informatics/knowledge-and-library-services>