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## **Palliative medicine**

Doctors in palliative medicine provide holistic [1], quality-of-life care to patients with serious, advanced and progressive illnesses that cannot be cured.

You'll provide expertise and support to colleagues, particularly those treating patients with complex conditions.



## Life as a doctor in palliative medicine

Doctors in palliative medicine play an important and wide-ranging educational role, advising colleagues, families and other healthcare professionals while helping to ensure high standards of care.

Most of your patients will have advanced or progressive cancer, although increasingly palliative medicine doctors treat patients with a range of conditions such as heart failure, renal failure and neurological conditions.

It is essential to possess a deep understanding of the pathology and management of these conditions, which creates opportunities to develop a sub-specialty. You will need expertise in the pharmacological management of a range of problems and an understanding of drug interactions and side effects.

You'll be an essential part of specialist palliative care services, for clinical expertise, quality improvement, education, research management and research.

You can expect to work in hospitals, hospices and in the community with home visits being common. In some settings, such as specialist impatient units, you'll have responsibility for the medical management of a patient. However, in most hospital settings, you'll play an advisory role alongside nurses who deliver most of the patient care.

At all times, you'll provide care that:

- strives to achieve the best quality of life for the patient for as long as possible
- involves managing and anticipating pain and other symptoms
- addresses the psychological, social and spiritual needs of the patient

- facilitates multi-professional support to provide joined-up care across care boundaries, enabling care at home and fewer avoidable admissions towards the end of life
- supports anticipatory planning with patients and professionals including advance planning in the last year of life
- supports end of life care that meets the needs and wishes of the individual and family
- supports the patient's family and significant others during the patient's illness and their bereavement

Common procedures and interventions include:

- paracentesis [2] (drawing off fluid form a natural cavity of the body)
- use of portable ultrasound [3]
- specialist pain techniques including management of epidural [4] infusions (a local anaesthetic procedure for blocking pain) occasionally in conjunction with a pain specialist
- management of central lines
- management of non invasive ventilation
- management of tracheostomies

## How much can I earn?

You'll first earn a salary when you start your <u>foundation training</u> [5] after medical school. Find out details of current salary ranges for foundation and specialty training, <u>SAS doctors</u> [6] and consultants on the <u>Pay for doctors</u> [7] 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, doctors in palliative medicine need to demonstrate:

- a high level of personal credibility as a clinician
- adaptability and resilience
- · compassion, empathy, a flexible outlook and a sense of humour

- interests such as enhancing the quality of life for patients with life-limiting illnesses and improving end of life care and developing multicultural awareness
- well-developed skills in bedside clinical assessment (especially in settings and situations when routine investigations would not be appropriate)
- expertise in managing difficult pain, physical symptoms and psychological distress
- excellent decision-making in the context of changing and distressing situations using sound knowledge of ethical considerations

## **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.

## How to become a doctor in palliative medicine

After medical school, you'll join the paid two-year <u>foundation?programme</u> [8]?where you'll work in six placements in different settings.?

After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid <u>specialty training</u> [9] to become a doctor in palliative medicine, 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 doctor in palliative medicine 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

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#### • Rehabilitative Palliative Care Assistant

King's Lynn, PE31 6BH

Salary: £24005.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Tapping House Apply now on NHS Jobs for Rehabilitative Palliative Care Assistant job (opens in a new window) [10]

#### • Palliative Care Support Worker

Great Bramingham Lane, LU3 3NT Salary: £23946.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Keech Hospice Care Apply now on NHS Jobs for Palliative Care Support Worker job (opens in a new window) [11]

#### • Specialty Doctor in Palliative Medicine

Bolton, BL1 4QT Salary: £59175.00 Type: Fixed-Term Employer: Bolton Hospice Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new window) [12]

#### • Speciality Doctor in Palliative Medicine

Swansea, SA6 6NL Salary: £59727.00 to £95400.00 Type: Fixed-Term Employer: Swansea Bay University Health Board Apply now on NHS Jobs for Speciality Doctor in Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new window) [13]

#### • Healthcare support worker- Palliative Care

Wrexham, LL13 7TD Salary: £24433.00 to £26060.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Apply now on NHS Jobs for Healthcare support worker- Palliative Care job (opens in a new window) [14]

#### Locum Consultant in Palliative Care

Mountain Ash, CF45 4BZ

Salary:

£121264.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant in Palliative Care job (opens in a new window) [15]

#### Clinical Research Fellow in Palliative Care

Southampton, SO16 6YD Salary: £49909.00 to £70425.00 Type: Fixed-Term Employer: University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Research Fellow in Palliative Care job (opens in a new window) [16]

#### • Senior Palliative Care Support Worker - Community Based

Hereford, HR1 4HA Salary: £13.56 to £14.01 Type: Permanent Employer: St Michael's Hospice Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Palliative Care Support Worker - Community Based job (opens in a new window) [17]

#### • Palliative Care Support Worker - IPU Ward Based

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Hereford, HR1 4HA
Salary:
	£12.84 to £13.16
Type:
	Permanent
Employer:
	St Michael's Hospice
Apply now on NHS Jobs for Palliative Care Support Worker - IPU Ward Based job
(opens in a new window) [18]
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#### • Lead Practitioner Psychologist in Cancer and Palliative Care

London, UB1 3HW Salary: Negotiable Type: Permanent Employer: London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Lead Practitioner Psychologist in Cancer and Palliative Care job (opens in a new window) [19]

#### Psychology Link Worker - Specialist Palliative Care, Band 4

Gloucester, GL1 3NN

Salary: £26530.00 to £29114.00 Type: Permanent Employer:

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Psychology Link Worker - Specialist Palliative Care, Band 4 job (opens in a new window) [20]

#### • Hospice at Home Palliative Care RN (SMH Band 6)

Basingstoke, RG24 9NB

Salary:

£37183.00 to £44774.00

Type: Permanent

Employer:

St Michael's Hospice (North Hampshire) <u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Hospice at Home Palliative Care RN (SMH Band 6) job</u> (opens in a new window) [21]

#### • Consultant in Palliative Medicine

Southampton, SO16 6YD

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new window) [22]

#### • Consultant in Palliative Medicine

SCARBOROUGH, YO12 5RE Salary: Negotiable Type: Permanent Employer: Saint Catherine's Hospice Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new window) [23]

#### • Consultant in Palliative Medicine

Sutton in Ashfield, NG17 4HJ

Salary: £105504.00 to £139882.00 Type: Fixed-Term Employer: Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new window) [24]

#### • SHO in Palliative Medicine

London, SE2 0GB Salary: £49909.00 Type: Fixed-Term Employer: Community Hospice <u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for SHO in Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new</u> window) [25]

#### • Locum Consultant Palliative Medicine

Norwich, NR4 7UY Salary: £105504.00 to £139882.00 Type: Fixed-Term Employer: Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new window) [26]

#### • Consultant in Palliative Medicine

Urmston, M41 5SN

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new window) [27]

#### Consultant in Adult Palliative Medicine

Grimsby, DN32 9RP

Salary: £105504.00 to £139882.00 Type: Permanent Employer: St Andrews Hospice Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Adult Palliative Medicine job (opens in a new window) [28]

#### • Training Programme Director - Palliative Medicine Mersey

Liverpool, L3 4BL

Salary: Negotiable Type: Secondment Employer: NHS England Apply now on NHS Jobs for Training Programme Director - Palliative Medicine Mersey job (opens in a new window) [29]

#### • Palliative End of Life Care Clinical Lead

To be confirmed, PL31 2QT

Salary: £46148.00 to £52809.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Palliative End of Life Care Clinical Lead job (opens in a new window) [30]

#### • Palliative Nursing Assistant - Bank

King's Lynn, PE31 6BH Salary: £12.31 Type: Bank Employer: Tapping House Apply now on NHS Jobs for Palliative Nursing Assistant - Bank job (opens in a new window) [31]

#### Palliative Radiotherapy Consultant Radiographer

Liverpool, L7 8YA

Salary:

£62215.00 to £72293.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHSFT

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Palliative Radiotherapy Consultant Radiographer job (opens in a new window) [32]

#### • Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine

Plymouth, PL6 8DH

Salary: Negotiable Type: Permanent Employer: University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine job (opens in a new window) [33]

#### • Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine

Hastings, TN37 7RD

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine job (opens in a <u>new window)</u> [34]

#### • Consultant in Critical Care Medicine

London, SW3 6NP Salary: £105504.00 to £139882.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Critical Care Medicine job (opens in a new window) [35]

#### Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine

Salisbury, SP2 8BJ Salary: £105504.00 to £139882.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine job (opens in a new window) [36]

#### • Consultant in Critical Care Medicine

London, E11 1NR Salary: £105504.00 to £139882.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Barts Health NHS Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Critical Care Medicine job (opens in a new window) [37]

#### • Care Coordinator Medicine Management

London, SE13 7SX Salary: Negotiable Type: Permanent Employer: The Lewisham Care Partnership Apply now on NHS Jobs for Care Coordinator Medicine Management job (opens in a new window) [38]

#### • Specialty Doctor - Emergency Medicine

Scarborough, YO12 6QL Salary: £59175.00 to £95400.00 Type: Permanent Employer: York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor - Emergency Medicine job (opens in a <u>new window)</u> [39]

#### • Specialty Doctor Emergency Medicine

Guildford, GU2 7XX Salary: £59175.00 to £95400.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor Emergency Medicine job (opens in a new window) [40]

#### Locum Consultant In Intensive Care Medicine

Burton upon Trent, DE13 0RB

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant In Intensive Care Medicine job (opens in a new window) [41]

#### • Consultant in Critical Care Medicine (Intensivist)

Redhill, RH1 5RH Salary: £105504.00 to £139882.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Critical Care Medicine (Intensivist) job (opens in a new window) [42]

#### Specialty Doctor in Emergency Medicine

Carlisle, CA2 7HY

Salary: £59175.00 to £95400.00 Type: Permanent Employer:

North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in Emergency Medicine job (opens in a new window) [43]

#### • Trust Doctor in Respiratory Medicine

Leeds, LS9 7TF

Salary:

£61825.00

Type: Fixed-Term

Employer:

Leeds Teaching Hospitals

Apply now on NHS Jobs for Trust Doctor in Respiratory Medicine job (opens in a new window) [44]

#### • Specialty Doctor in Emergency Medicine

Yeovil, BA21 4AT

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in Emergency Medicine job (opens in a new window) [45]

#### • Specialty Doctor - Anaesthetics with Intensive Care

Keighley, BD20 6TD Salary: £59175.00 to £95400.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Airedale NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor - Anaesthetics with Intensive Care job (opens in a new window) [46]

#### • Specialty Doctor in Anaesthetics & Critical Care

Llantrisant, Pontyclun, CF72 8XR

Salary: £59727.00 to £95400.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board <u>Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in Anaesthetics & Critical Care job</u> (opens in a new window) [47]

#### Named Doctor for Children in Care

Liverpool, L12 2AP

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Named Doctor for Children in Care job (opens in a new window) [48]

#### • Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine and Anaesthetics

Canterbury, CT1 3NG

Salary: £105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine and Anaesthetics job (opens in a new window) [49]

#### Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine and Anaesthetics

Milton Keynes, MK6 5LD

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Intensive Care Medicine and Anaesthetics job (opens in a new window) [50]

#### • Clinical Fellow in Paediatric Intensive Care Medicine

Birmingham, B4 6NH

Salary: £61825.00 to £70425.00 Type: Fixed-Term Employer: Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Fellow in Paediatric Intensive Care Medicine job (opens in a new window) [51]

#### Medicines Management Pharmacy Technician - Primary Care

Ashington, NE63 0NG

Salary: £29970.00 to £36483.00 Type: Permanent Employer: Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Medicines Management Pharmacy Technician -Primary Care job (opens in a new window) [52]

#### • Bank Doctor in General Medicine (ST3+)

Victoria Road, Macclesfield, SK10 3BL

Salary: Negotiable Type: Bank Employer: East Cheshire NHS Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Bank Doctor in General Medicine (ST3+) job (opens in a new window) [53]

#### • Specialty Doctor in General Internal Medicine

Haverfordwest, SA61 2PZ Salary: Negotiable Type: Fixed-Term Employer: Hywel Dda University Health Board Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in General Internal Medicine job (opens in a new window) [54]

#### Speciality Doctor in Older Peoples Care Unit

Sutton In Ashfield, NG17 4JT

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Speciality Doctor in Older Peoples Care Unit job (opens in a new window) [55]

#### • Specialty Doctor in Care of the Elderly

Bristol, BS10 5NB

Salary: £59175.00 to £95400.00 Type: Permanent Employer: North Bristol NHS Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in Care of the Elderly job (opens in a new window) [56]

#### • Specialty Doctor in Complex Care Mental Health

Bournemouth, BH7 6JF

Salary:

£52530.00 to £82400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in Complex Care Mental Health job (opens in a new window) [57]

## • Further information

These organisations have further information about being a doctor in palliative medicine, particularly as your career progresses. Take a look.

Royal College of Physicians [58]

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh [59]

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow [60]

The Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland [61]

The National Council for Palliative Care (NCPC) [62]

And hear from people working as palliative care doctors:

A palliative medicine consultant (BMJ) [63]

Dr Richard Berman, consultant in palliative medicine (RCP) [64]

Dr Fiona Finlay – ST6, palliative medicine [65]

## Other roles that may interest you

- Medical oncology [66]
- General practitioner [67]
- Geriatric medicine [68]
- <u>Respiratory medicine</u> [69]

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#### Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Holistic [2] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Paracentesis [3] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Ultrasound [4] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Epidural [5] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation\_training [6] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/career-opportunities-doctors/sas-doctors[7] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/pay-doctors [8] https://foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/ [9] https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/ [10] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0219-25-0013 [11] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0364-25-0017 [12] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0057-25-0008 [13] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/H9130-25-0522 [14] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/H9050-25-1715 [15] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/H9110-25-0824 [16] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9188-25-0549 [17] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0210-25-0007 [18] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0210-25-0008 [19] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9337-25-2664 [20] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9318-25-0554 [21] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0460-25-0021 [22] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9188-25-0496 [23] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0042-25-0022 [24] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9186-25-0635 [25] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0207-25-0005 [26] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9234-25-0338 [27] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9349-25-1533 [28] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/B0286-25-0006 [29] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/M9990-25-0195 [30] https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9201-25-0568 [31]

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