

## Health records staff

Health records staff make sure that details of patients and their care are recorded and stored. They work with patients and other staff.

This page has information on the role of health records staff, including entry requirements and skills needed.

### Working life

Each NHS patient has a record of all their treatment and care which has to be accurate and up to date. Health records staff (sometimes known as medical records staff) are responsible for organising, updating and storing records. This can be either a physical (paper) record or stored electronically - or a mix of both



Records about patients have to be kept safely and confidentially. They have to meet government and legal requirements for data protection etc. If you work in health records within

the NHS, you could be based in clinical and non-clinical areas such as:

- hospital wards of all types
- specialist departments or clinics, including cancer centres or accident and emergency units
- GP surgeries and health centres
- the headquarters of an NHS trust
- central stores
- health records department

In addition, health records staff prepare for storage records no longer needed. Some health records clerks have other duties such as answering phones or in a reception area.



Health records staff working on a ward or in a clinic or health centre have a lot of contact with patients and their relatives and carers. You'll also have contact with healthcare professionals including [nurses](#) [1] and doctors, including [GPs](#) [2] and [emergency medicine doctors](#) [3], for example. Others may have little or no contact with patients, for example, those in central stores, health records departments or headquarters. You'll work closely with other admin staff and members of the wider healthcare team.

## Entry requirements, skills and interests

There are no set entry requirements for health records staff. Employers usually expect good literacy, numeracy and IT skills. They may ask for GCSEs or equivalent qualifications. For some jobs, employers may ask for other skills or qualifications such as word processing or data entry.

Employers often ask for relevant work experience. Even where this is not specified, it would be an advantage if you have worked in an admin or customer service role.

There are often apprenticeships in administrative roles, including some in health records.

Health records staff work across the NHS, in clinical and non-clinical areas .

[Find out more about apprenticeships and traineeships](#) [4]

## Personal characteristics

Health records staff need to be:

- accurate and methodical
- able to work in a team but use their own initiative
- willing to follow instructions and procedures
- able to work with all types of people
- confident using the phone

## Skills required

- organisational skills
- IT skills
- customer service skills

## Training and development

You will get the training you need to do the job. This includes an introduction to the department, how to use the IT and phone equipment and the procedures to follow. You may also have training in customer care. You may be offered the chance to take qualifications such as NVQs or those from:

- Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers, Administrators and Receptionists (AMSPAR) <sup>[5]</sup>
- British Society of Medical Secretaries and Administrators (BSMSA) <sup>[6]</sup>
- Institute of Health Records and Information Management (IHRIM) <sup>[7]</sup>

Some health records staff become members of AMSPAR, BSMSA or IHRIM. These organisations offer training, online forums and newsletters so health records staff can network with others doing the same type of work.

- Pay and conditions

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Health records staff in the NHS work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. Some may work shifts, which could involve early starts, evenings and weekends. NHS staff working in health records will usually be paid on the Agenda for Change <sup>[8]</sup> pay system. Health records staff outside of the NHS will have different terms and conditions of service.

- Where the role can lead

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With experience, you could become a team leader, coordinating the work of a team of health records staff. With further experience, you could become a manager, responsible for the work of a health records department.

Some health records staff move into more specialist roles such as medical secretary or PA [9]. Others move into areas such as finance [10] or HR [11]. You may also have the opportunity to move into informatics [12], specialising in electronic data, or into IT.

- Job market and vacancies

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Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [13]. Some advertise on their own websites. You can find a list of NHS organisations on NHS Choices [14].

Jobs in GP surgeries and health centres are often advertised locally.

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. [15]

- Further information

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For more information about a career in health records, please contact:

- Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers, Administrators and Receptionists [5]
- British Society of Medical Secretaries and Administrators [6]
- Institute of Health Records and Information Management (IHRIM) [16]

## Other roles that may interest you

- Administrative management [17]
- Human resources staff [18]
- Medical secretary/personal assistant [19]
- Experienced paramedic [20]

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**Source URL:** <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/health-records-staff>

### Links

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

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/general-practice-gp>

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/emergency-medicine>

- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-cadet-schemes>
- [5] <http://www.amspar.com>
- [6] <http://www.bsmsa.org.uk>
- [7] <http://www.ihrim.co.uk>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.lampuat64-3.rroom.net/about-us/careers-nhs/pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/administration/medical-secretarypersonal-assistant>
- [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/corporate-services/finance-staff>
- [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/corporate-services/human-resources-staff>
- [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/health-informatics>
- [13] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk>
- [14] <http://www.nhs.uk/aboutnhs/howthenhsworks/authoritiesandtrusts/Pages/Authoritiesandtrusts.aspx>
- [15] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>
- [16] <http://www.ihrim.co.uk/>
- [17] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/management/roles-management/operational-management/administrative-management>
- [18] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/corporate-services/human-resources-staff>
- [19] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/administration/medical-secretarypersonal-assistant>
- [20] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/experienced-paramedic>