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Chaplain

Chaplains offer pastoral and spiritual care to all patients and their carers, friends and family as well as NHS staff.

Working life

Each chaplain is a leader in their own faith or belief system and are expected to work closely with those of other faiths and beliefs.



You're usually based in a hospital and work in any department as needed. As well as an office, you'll have a chapel or multi-faith room which staff, patients and families can visit. However, as a chaplain, you will spend a lot of time in wards and other parts of the hospital visiting people who are too ill to move from their beds.

Some chaplains travel between hospitals, clinics, hospices, etc.

Chaplains represent the faiths and belief systems of the local population who use NHS services. You will work with patients, staff and families with any faith or no faith.

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Some NHS chaplains also work in their own faith outside the NHS. People who are ill or who have a family member who is ill may have spiritual or emotional needs. As a chaplain, you'll help them deal with the experiences of life and death, illness and injury in the context of a faith or belief system. You'll also support the spiritual needs of staff.

Entry requirements

Chaplains have to be accredited as leaders in a recognised faith community. They usually have a degree or a professional qualification.

Employers expect chaplains to have experience as a leader in their own faith and experience of spiritual and pastoral care. Employers may also ask for some experience in healthcare work. This could be from, for example, hospital visiting while working as a faith leader elsewhere.

Personal characteristics and skills

As a chaplain in the NHS, you'll need to be

- willing to work with other faiths and people with no faith
- able to work with staff, patients and families from all walks of life
- flexible
- caring and compassionate
- able to work as part of a team with healthcare staff

You'll also need

- excellent communication, including listening, skills
- able to see things from another person's point of view
- good organisational skill

Training and development

Chaplains new to the NHS have training which includes

- an introduction to healthcare chaplaincy
- spirituality and chaplaincy in a multi-faith context
- working in the NHS
- working with people who are mentally ill

Chaplains may be able to study for postgraduate qualifications in, for example, healthcare chaplaincy or counselling.

Registration

A voluntary register of healthcare chaplains in the UK is maintained by the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy [1] (UKBHC).

The Professional Standards Authority [2] accredits a number of voluntary registers against its standards including governance, setting standards for registrants, education and training, managing the register. These voluntary registers include the UKBHC register

For more information about working, training or registering as healthcare chaplain, please contact the organisations listed under the 'Further information' section below

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Pay and conditions

Chaplains working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) [3] pay system. You will typically start on AfC [4] band 5. With further training and experience, you could apply for a chaplain team leader position at band 6 or 7.

Chaplains in the NHS work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. They are likely to work weekends and evenings. They may be part of an on-call rota.

Terms and conditions will usually be different for chaplains working outside of the NHS.

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Where the role can lead

With experience, a chaplain could become a team leader, supervising the work of other chaplains. They could then progress to become a manager, responsible for chaplaincy in a hospital or NHS trust. They may be involved in training other chaplains.

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Job market and vacancies

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. [5]

Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [6]. Some of the current vacancies are below.

Find a vacancy

Enter your location or postcode

Show results within

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Chaplain

Worthing, BN11 2DH

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (279)

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Chaplain job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [7]

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Chaplain

Stoke on Trent, ST4 6QG

Salary:

£28407.00 to £34581.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospital of North Midlands NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Chaplain job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [8]

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Generic Chaplain

Sheffield, S10 2TH

Salary:

£28407.00 to £34581.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Generic Chaplain job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [9]

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Christian Chaplain (Whipps Cross Hospital)

London, E11 1NR

Salary:

£40701.00 to £48054.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Barts Health NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Christian Chaplain \(Whipps Cross Hospital\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [10]

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Further

information

- Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains (AHPCC) [11]
- College of Health Care Chaplains (CHCC) [12]
- Healthcare Chaplaincy Faith and Belief Group (HCFBG) [13]
- NHS England - NHS Chaplaincy Programme [14]
- UK Board of Healthcare Chaplains (UKBHC) [1]

Other roles that may interest you

- Counsellor [15]
- Counselling psychologist [16]
- Health psychologist [17]
- Clinical bioinformatics health informatics [18]

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Links

[1] <http://www.ukbhc.org.uk/> [2] <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/>
[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
[4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution> [6] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/> [7] <https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9279-24-0995> [8] <https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9205-24-0766>
[9] <https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9425-24-0228>
[10] <https://beta.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9259-24-1355> [11] <http://www.ahpcc.org.uk/>
[12] <https://www.healthcarechaplains.org/> [13] <http://network-health.org.uk/>
[14] <https://www.england.nhs.uk/chaplaincy/> [15] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/roles/counsellor> [16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/roles/counselling-psychologist> [17] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies/roles/health-psychologist> [18] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/clinical-bioinformatics/clinical-bioinformatics-health-informatics>