

# Healthcare Science Week

A guide for healthcare  
science staff



Inspiring the healthcare science workforce of the future!

# Delivering Healthcare Science Week locally

13 to 22 March 2015

A communications guide for healthcare science professionals and NHS organisations

“  
*Healthcare Science Week is an invaluable opportunity to inspire the next generation of healthcare science staff.*”

National Healthcare Science Week is part of British Science Week and is a fantastic opportunity to promote the amazing work of healthcare science professionals and highlight how they make a difference to patients' lives. Taking place from 13 to 22 March 2015, Healthcare Science Week is your chance to tell your local community and other health professionals about how science and technology is vital in modern patient care and changes lives for the better. It's also an invaluable opportunity to inspire the next generation of healthcare science staff by promoting the new career structures in local schools and colleges.

Healthcare science teams and NHS trusts across the UK will be showcasing their work to patients and the public, so make sure you and your organisation are part of the celebrations.

Read on and take the first step.

## This guide – all the information you need

This guide has all the information you need to get you thinking about Healthcare Science Week. It has a range of tips and ideas, including:

- suggested activities
- myths to dispel around healthcare science
- information about becoming a healthcare science ambassador
- links to a toolkit of information to use when giving presentations in schools and colleges
- draft press releases and articles for internal communications
- good practice example from a previous Healthcare Science Week
- other useful web links for more information.



# Healthcare science ambassadors – we need you!

Healthcare science professionals from all specialisms and all grades have signed up to become Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network (STEMNET) NHS Healthcare Science Ambassadors. But we need more to spread the word. Can you help?



## What do ambassadors do?

NHS healthcare science ambassadors give as little as half a day a year to promoting their profession and sharing their enthusiasm about a science career in the NHS. It's not a big time commitment but it can make a big difference in your area, particularly to young people in schools and colleges.

Healthcare science ambassadors get involved in all sorts of local activities. Taking part in National Healthcare Science Week is one of them, but ambassadors also run science and engineering clubs, provide careers guidance and mentoring to interested students, and facilitate NHS work-based placements for both teachers and students.

The chance for young people and their teachers to meet real-life healthcare science staff is invaluable, and existing ambassadors say the role is great fun, very rewarding, and excellent for their personal development and professional networking.

## Resources to help you

Don't worry if you don't feel confident about the areas of healthcare science that you don't actually work in. The NHS Careers website ([www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hcstoolkit](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hcstoolkit)) has all the materials you need to help you in your ambassador role, including:

- presentation slides outlining all the areas of healthcare science
- a video with real life healthcare science students talking about their experiences
- a leaflet and poster to hand out
- individual stories to bring healthcare science careers to life
- supporting notes including top tips for giving lively and engaging presentations.

“  
*Being an ambassador is not a big time commitment but it can make a big difference.*”

## Sign up today

If you are enthusiastic about healthcare science, we need you to share your knowledge and experience to inspire the healthcare science workforce of the future!

NHS healthcare science ambassadors are part of the nationwide STEM Ambassadors Programme made up of professionals from all walks of life to help promote their careers to young people. To register, visit the STEMNET website ([www.stemnet.org.uk](http://www.stemnet.org.uk)) where there is a direct link to the registration site in the top right-hand corner of the homepage. Make sure you select 'NHS healthcare science ambassador' from the drop down menu on page two of the registration form to ensure you are on the healthcare science ambassadors list.

Once you have registered, you will be contacted by your local STEM Ambassadors' Coordinator about an induction and DBS check (free for STEM Healthcare Science Ambassadors). Once these are completed satisfactorily, you will be ready to volunteer for activities in your area, which will be sent to you by the ambassadors' coordinator.

STEMNET acts as a facilitator between healthcare science ambassadors and schools in their area, finding out what schools need and putting them in touch with the right ambassador, whether its in engineering, manufacturing or...healthcare science. Please do encourage your colleagues to sign up too!

“  
*Great fun, very rewarding, and excellent for personal development and professional networking.*  
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## Top tips and ideas for activities

Here are some top tips and ideas for activities you can use to engage your local communities to celebrate Healthcare Science Week. Many of these can also be used in partnership with the tips provided for engaging with local media.

### Build-up to Healthcare Science Week

- Please encourage all your healthcare science colleagues to become an ambassador to promote their profession throughout Healthcare Science Week and beyond. All they need to do is register with their local STEM Ambassadors' Coordinator via the STEMNET website at: [www.stemnet.org.uk](http://www.stemnet.org.uk).
- A local STEM Ambassadors' Coordinator will contact **schools and colleges in your area** to arrange visits for you. They'll tell you what the school is looking for, such as a talk about careers in healthcare science or a scientific demonstration. STEMNET covers primary and secondary schools, as well as some sixth form and further education colleges.
- Speak to your **communications department** about opportunities to promote Healthcare Science Week internally at your organisation. For example, you could post an article about healthcare science on your intranet (see the example in this guide). They'll also be able to help you coordinate activities.
- Also speak to your communications department about engaging with **local media** during Healthcare Science Week. Some ideas for engaging the media can be found in the next section.
- It is a great idea to try to get involved in **local events and activities** around National Science Week so look out for some in your area. A few are below and you may want to contact the organisations involved to see if your organisation can link in.

Alton Towers, Staffordshire  
[www.altontowers.com/info-help/schools/national-science-week](http://www.altontowers.com/info-help/schools/national-science-week)

Cambridge University, Cambridge  
[www.cam.ac.uk/sciencefestival](http://www.cam.ac.uk/sciencefestival)

University of Leeds, Leeds  
[www.leeds.ac.uk/festivalofscience](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/festivalofscience)

University of Manchester, Manchester  
[www.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.manchester.ac.uk)

Sheffield Festival of Science and Engineering  
[www.scienceweeksy.org.uk](http://www.scienceweeksy.org.uk)

“  
*A local STEM Ambassadors' Coordinator will contact schools and colleges in your area to arrange visits for you.*  
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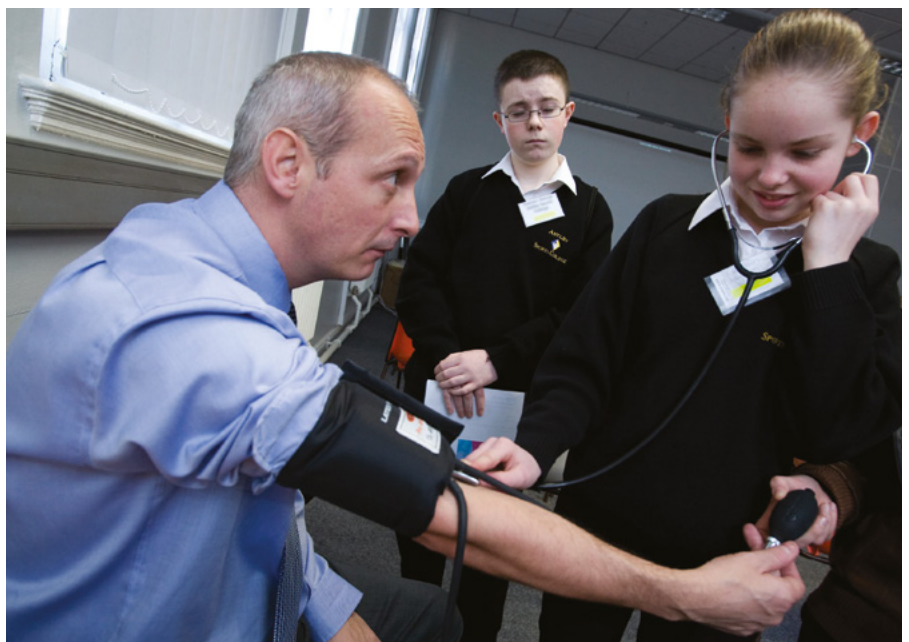
## During Healthcare Science Week

- Invite some students from a **local school or college** to visit you in the workplace. But make sure you talk to your HR department first about the organisation's policy on work experience or job shadowing!
- Run a series of **careers advice or mentoring sessions** with students interested in healthcare science as a career.
- Set up a display about healthcare science in the **foyer or cafeteria** at your organisation or at your **local shopping centre**.
- Put on a healthcare science **roadshow or open day** at your trust and invite local schools, colleges and members of the public to attend.
- Promote any activities during Healthcare Science Week through **social media** (remembering to adhere to your organisation's protocols). For example, you could post photos or videos through your organisation's channels, such as Facebook, Flickr and Twitter, and don't forget to use #hcsweek on Twitter!

“  
Remember to  
use #hcsweek on  
Twitter!”

## Showing your support for your profession – some quick wins

- Pledge your support for Healthcare Science Week by posting something on your Facebook, Twitter or any other **social media** account. Remember to use #hcsweek on Twitter!
- Take the opportunity to talk to **patients, users and colleagues** about your role and the diverse work of healthcare science staff.



## Engaging the local media

To help promote your Healthcare Science Week activities, here are a few ideas for you and your communications department to use when approaching the local media. Please note – it is important that you adhere to your organisation's policies on communicating with the media, so make sure you let your communications team know of any planned activity.

- Invite either the local paper to take photographs or take some yourself (see annex A for photography brief) of any **event** at your organisation – perhaps in your foyer or cafeteria – celebrating Healthcare Science Week. Alternatively, you could organise a **stand** at your local shopping centre and invite the media along.
- Write an **opinion piece in your local newspaper**. Speak to your manager and communications department about liaising with your local newspapers about this. It could focus on healthcare science staff being natural innovators and at the cutting edge of life-saving science and technology in the NHS or focus on a breakthrough in healthcare led by the science team at your organisation.
- Offer a **case study of a healthcare scientist, or team of healthcare science staff**, who have shown a fantastic commitment to patient care or real innovation in their work. The case study should demonstrate how the individual or healthcare science team have a direct impact on patient care. If it can be arranged, find a patient who is happy to speak to the media about the care they received – this is often a great selling point to journalists!
- **Visit a local school** and talk to students about your role or provide some kind of scientific demonstration. You could do this with other healthcare science staff and invite journalists to attend and interview the students and staff. Even better if any of the healthcare science workforce are ex-students of the school!
- Organise a **Q&A with healthcare science staff** at a local school or college. This could be a session with students asking questions about what it is like to work in healthcare science and what the profession has to offer them as a career. Invite the media along to listen to the session. It is also an opportunity for ambassadors to demonstrate how healthcare science staff are at the forefront of driving innovation in healthcare.
- Arrange for a group of **local school or college students** interested in a career in healthcare science to spend some time in your workplace. Invite local media to take some photos and interview the students about their experience.
- **'When I grow up I want to...'** Contact your local radio station about conducting a phone-in session, where listeners can call in to share their childhood ambitions which can lead on to a discussion of career options for young people and what healthcare science can offer them.





## Myths about healthcare science

### **The healthcare science team doesn't work with patients. True or false?**

*False: Many healthcare science professionals work directly with patients. This could be anything from monitoring breathing or heart rates to helping disabled patients with custom made technology such as artificial limbs or wheelchairs.*

### **Healthcare science staff don't just work in labs. True or false?**

*True: Some healthcare science teams work in labs but many do not, especially in areas where they need to interact with patients. This could mean working on wards or in the community visiting patients at home to help monitor their breathing problems, or check that their home dialysis machines are working properly. Science staff working in the Health Protection Agency may visit sites of disease outbreaks to try and work out where and why they started.*

### **Doctors couldn't do their job without the support of the healthcare science team. True or false?**

*True: Healthcare science staff are critical to the delivery of patient care. In fact, the healthcare science workforce are involved in over 80% of all clinical decisions in the NHS and develop some of the most innovative and ground breaking clinical technologies. For example, it was a healthcare scientist, Roger Ekins, who developed radioimmuno assays – a way of detecting chemicals that are present in very tiny quantities in the body, like hormones. And Professor Malcolm Sperrin conducted research into lithotripsy – how sound can be used to 'smash' painful kidney stones, which has been invaluable to doctors and patients.*

### **Healthcare science staff monitor how patients are responding to certain treatments. True or false?**

*True: Healthcare science professionals increasingly work directly with patients to see how they are responding to drugs and other treatments. Some even run their own clinics.*

### **There is no career progression in healthcare science. True or false?**

*False: There is a clear career pathway for staff working in healthcare science. With hard work and a commitment to continuous learning, you could reach the level of consultant healthcare scientist.*



## Template press release – March 2015

### **(NAME OF ORGANISATION/TOWN/COUNTY) Healthcare science staff celebrate Healthcare Science Week**

Healthcare science staff from (NAME OF ORGANISATION/TOWN/COUNTY) will be celebrating British Science Week, run by the British Science Association, from 13 to 22 March 2015 by (EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES).

As part of the wider National Science Week, healthcare science professionals across the UK, are engaging their local communities for Healthcare Science Week and demonstrating the outstanding work of individuals working in healthcare science and their impact on patient care. They will also be showcasing the difference healthcare science staff make to the health of individual patients and the overall health of the nation, including examples of extraordinary innovation.

Healthcare science teams will also be promoting their profession as an exciting career choice for young people, by visiting schools and colleges. (MORE INFORMATION ON LOCAL ACTIVITY AND WHO IS INVOLVED TO BE INCLUDED HERE).

(NAME), (TRUST CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR OTHER SENIOR FIGURE) at (NAME OF ORGANISATION), said: "Healthcare Science Week is a great opportunity for us to celebrate the amazing work of the healthcare science workforce at the (NAME OF ORGANISATION). There are still a lot of myths about healthcare science as a career, and with the support and resources of NHS Careers and the Academy for Healthcare Science; we are able to challenge these misconceptions."

(NAME), (HEALTHCARE SCIENCE STAFF MEMBER) at (NAME OF ORGANISATION), said: "The chance to get out in the community and promote my profession is fantastic. People working in healthcare science don't often get the opportunity to talk about the work we do and the difference we make to people's lives. I love my job and being able to use science to improve the care we provide to patients every day in the NHS."

Sue Hill is the Chief Scientific Officer for healthcare science at NHS England.

She said: "Healthcare Science Week is the perfect opportunity to promote healthcare science as an exciting career option for young people and highlight our work to the wider community. Healthcare science staff cover a diverse range of specialisms, everything from directly helping patients on a ward, to working with other healthcare professionals on groundbreaking research."

Professor Ian Cumming, Chief Executive at Health Education England, said: "Everything healthcare science staff do supports and improves patient care. Their unique contribution of bringing cutting edge science to patient services should be celebrated across the NHS during National Healthcare Science Week."

## Notes to editors

1. Healthcare science professionals in the NHS are involved in all sorts of innovative work that makes a difference to the health of both individual patients and the nation. For example, Matt Rutter works in cardiovascular, respiratory and sleep sciences. He correctly identified that existing guidelines on the extra oxygen needed by people with lung problems when they fly were wrong, and proved it after gathering more data. And Eskinder Solomon works in clinical engineering, providing technological solutions to medical problems such as new medical devices. He's recently been working on a device that detects when patients snore or stop breathing when they go to sleep.
2. Healthcare Science Week is part of British Science Week ([www.britishecienceassociation.org](http://www.britishecienceassociation.org)) which is a national celebration of the different science disciplines, and takes place in March each year. As well as talking about the variety of career options available in healthcare science, staff will also help to dispel some of the common myths about it, including that healthcare science staff do not directly treat or interact with patients and only work in labs.
3. NHS Careers is the careers information service for the NHS in England. It consists of a telephone and email helpline, website, literature and other supporting materials. NHS Careers is available to anyone in England wanting information on entering a career in the NHS. It also supports NHS trusts, schools, colleges and careers advisers. For more information, visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk)
4. Health Education England is supporting Healthcare Science Week. The NHS in England alone employs over 50,000 healthcare science staff, with many more working in the voluntary and private sector. In fact, the healthcare science workforce are involved in over 80% of all clinical decisions in the NHS and develop some of the most innovative clinical technologies.
5. The Academy for Healthcare Science (AHCS) is a UK wide organisation bringing together a diverse and specialised scientific community working within the NHS and other associated organisations, Health and Social Care Northern Ireland (HSCNI) and the academic and independent healthcare sector. For more information, visit [www.academyforhealthcarescience.co.uk](http://www.academyforhealthcarescience.co.uk).

## Template intranet article for your organisation's website

### **(NAME OF ORGANISATION) NHS healthcare science staff are celebrating Healthcare Science Week.**

Healthcare science staff from (NAME OF ORGANISATION/TOWN/COUNTY) will be celebrating Healthcare Science Week from 13 to 22 March 2015 by (EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES).

(MORE INFORMATION ON LOCAL ACTIVITY AND WHO IS INVOLVED TO BE INCLUDED HERE)

Healthcare science professionals across the UK are engaging their local communities to highlight the outstanding work they do and the impact this work has on patient care. Healthcare science teams will be showcasing how they make a difference to the health of individuals and the nation, including examples of extraordinary innovation.

They will also be visiting local schools and colleges to promote their profession as a fantastic career option to young people. As well as talking about the different career options available in healthcare science, staff will also help to dispel some of the common myths about it, including that healthcare science staff do not treat patients directly and only work in labs.

(NAME), (DIRECTOR OF HEALTHCARE SCIENCE) at (NAME OF ORGANISATION), said:

“Healthcare Science Week is a great opportunity for us to celebrate the amazing work of all healthcare science staff at the (NAME OF ORGANISATION). It is also a real chance for us to promote this specialism as a career option for young people. There are still a lot of myths about healthcare science as a career, and with the support and resources of NHS Careers and the Academy for Healthcare Science, we are able to challenge these misconceptions.”

(NAME), (HEALTHCARE SCIENCE STAFF MEMBER) at (NAME OF ORGANISATION), said: “The chance to get out in the community and celebrate my profession is fantastic. People working in healthcare science don't often get the opportunity to talk about the work they do and the difference they make to people's lives. I love my job and being able to use science to improve the care we provide to patients every day in the NHS. Healthcare Science Week is a real chance to highlight our work to the wider community.”

Healthcare Science Week runs from 13 to 22 March 2015. You can post about it on Twitter using the hashtag #hcsweek.

## Template letter to your MP

Below is a template letter that you could send to your local MP to secure their support for Healthcare Science Week 2015.

(DATE)

Dear (ADD NAME),

Healthcare Science Week, 13 to 22 March 2015, is a national celebration of the crucial work carried out by NHS healthcare science teams everyday and we urge you to show your support.

Healthcare science staff in/at (NAME OF TOWN/ORGANISATION(S)) are recognising this important week by (TALK ABOUT ANY LOCAL ACTIVITY TAKING PLACE).

We would like to invite you to support us in these celebrations. This could mean joining us at one of these events or by raising awareness of the fantastic work done by healthcare science staff as part of your parliamentary business.

Healthcare Science Week is our opportunity to showcase some of the innovative work being done by healthcare science professionals in (NAME OF CONSTITUENCY) and across the country. It is also the chance to highlight the career opportunities in science in the NHS for young people in our community and dispel some of the common misconceptions.

We look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

(NAME)

## Useful resources and links

Here are some resources and links to help you during Healthcare Science Week.

### Toolkit for NHS healthcare science ambassadors

Have a look at our toolkit of information to help NHS healthcare science ambassadors and others when they are giving presentations in schools and colleges.

The toolkit contains:

- presentation slides outlining all the specialisms of healthcare science
- a video with real life healthcare science students talking about their experiences
- a leaflet and poster to hand out
- individual stories to bring healthcare science careers to life
- supporting notes that include top tips for giving lively and engaging presentations.

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hcstoolkit](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hcstoolkit)

### Videos

Check out the links below for all sorts of useful videos to help you sell your healthcare science story.

#### Classroom Medics

Classroom Medics is a team of medics, physiologists and scientists who visit schools to help pupils make more informed decisions about their careers and future ambitions. Have a look at some of their workshops.

[www.classroommedics.co.uk](http://www.classroommedics.co.uk)

or

[www.youtube.com/user/classroommedicstv](https://www.youtube.com/user/classroommedicstv)

#### Practitioner Training Programme (PTP)

Hear from real-life healthcare science students on the NHS PTP.

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/ptp](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/ptp)

#### North West Healthcare Science Network

Download inspirational videos of real life stories from patients on how healthcare science has changed their lives.

[www.nwhcs.nhs.uk](http://www.nwhcs.nhs.uk)

#### Genomics and bioinformatics courses

Find out about the new online courses which are available for anyone to try and gain a certificate at the end.

[www.genomicseducation.hee.nhs.uk/course-list](http://www.genomicseducation.hee.nhs.uk/course-list)

## Literature

Read our two leaflets about healthcare science careers:

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hcsleaflet](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hcsleaflet)

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/ptleaflet](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/ptleaflet)

Take a look at *Extraordinary You* – a book profiling 50 of the best and brightest talents in healthcare science:

Download at [www.nwhcs.nhs.uk](http://www.nwhcs.nhs.uk)

## NHS Careers website

Visit the healthcare science web pages on the NHS Careers website for up-to-date career, training and entry route information:

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hcs](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hcs)

## Get in touch

The NHS Careers team is there to help you between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, so give them a call on:

**0345 60 60 655**

Or you can email NHS Careers at:  
[advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk](mailto:advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk)

## Useful organisations

### Academy for Healthcare Science

The Academy for Healthcare Science sets common standards for healthcare science practice.

[www.academyforhealthcarescience.co.uk](http://www.academyforhealthcarescience.co.uk)

### STEMNET

The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network (STEMNET) creates opportunities to inspire and enable young people to develop their creativity, problem-solving and employability skills.

[www.stemnet.org.uk](http://www.stemnet.org.uk)

### British Science Association

A registered charity that exists to advance the public understanding, accessibility and accountability of the sciences and engineering in the UK.

[www.britishscienceassociation.org](http://www.britishscienceassociation.org)

### Science Boffins

Scientists who present hands-on scientific experiments to get children interested in science. See what's planned during National Science Week.

[www.scienceboffins.co.uk/national-science-week.htm](http://www.scienceboffins.co.uk/national-science-week.htm)

## Annex A. Photography brief

As part of any media relations for Healthcare Science Week, the local press are likely to require supporting images for any articles. Should you need it, we have drafted some guidance on supplying photos for the media.

Photography should be labelled clearly, highlighting the following details:

- the names and details of those in the photograph
- the name of the trust, school, shopping centre, etc.

Remember:

- All images have to be approved by those in the picture and for minors their parents/ guardians will need to provide written permission (a permission form is attached in Annex B).
- Aim to take five to ten photos per subject, to ensure you have a wide range to choose from.
- Photos need to be high resolution 300 dpi (if possible).
- If lighting inside is gloomy, take the subject outside.
- Try not to take photographs in front of a wall or window.

### Photography Brief

#### Single portrait or group shot of subject

To make the most of any photo opportunities:

1. Position subject(s) with background relevant to the story or with a non-descript background if no other is available. If at all possible, avoid placing subject(s) in front of walls and ensure there is plenty of clear space behind to give depth of field.
2. Try to get your subject(s) smiling! Their body needs to be slightly angled to one side but looking directly into the lens to avoid 'mug-shot' style photos.
3. Minimum  $\frac{3}{4}$  length body shot ensuring arms and hands are in view is preferable. Ensure there is space above their heads.
4. Don't be afraid to try out a few different poses or backgrounds to ensure there are plenty of useable shots.
5. Creative suggestions for photos:
  - any healthcare science staff with local students at a school
  - healthcare science staff in local shopping centre talking to people in the community
  - healthcare science staff with any Healthcare Science Week materials outside a hospital or other NHS organisation.



## Annex B. Photography permission form

I agree that any photographs which relate to me or anyone for whom I give consent may be published or broadcast for the purposes explained to me. I also agree that these materials of me or anyone for whom I give consent may be kept by (NAME OF NHS ORGANISATION) and published again for (NAME OF NHS ORGANISATION) purposes only.

Name of model/guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*NB. If the photograph is of a child under 16 please ensure that the guardian of the child signs on their behalf.*

## Annex C.

### University Hospitals Bristol celebrated a previous Healthcare Science Week by holding a foyer event for both staff and the general public.

The trust positioned a stand in the British Heart Institute foyer so many staff, patients and members of the public passed by and stopped to have a chat. People were invited to go along to the stand to meet some of the healthcare scientists working in the trust and talk to them about the wide range of rewarding careers in healthcare science. The stand was staffed by healthcare science professionals from different healthcare science backgrounds who were available to answer questions about their roles.

The event was held as part of Healthcare Science Week and aimed to raise awareness of the role of healthcare scientists in the NHS and the wide range of careers available. With some 50,000 healthcare scientists working in the NHS in England alone, they are responsible for delivering almost a billion diagnostic tests every year and innovations in science and technology are opening up exciting new opportunities and roles.

Vascular scientists, medical physicists and various professionals from pathology were present to talk to visitors about their job role, explain the qualifications required and the recruitment and training pathways within their profession. They also provided a range of fact sheets and career leaflets for visitors to take away with them.

The stand was a huge success with the public and professionals alike. The public were surprised at how many different professions exist within healthcare science and their own staff were too. The stand not only provided the opportunity for the promotion of healthcare science careers externally but also internally with existing staff and science professionals.



Call us on **0345 60 60 655** or email  
**[advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk](mailto:advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk)** for more information.

NHS Careers helpline is open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.