

Careers in medicine

Join the team and
make a difference



Welcome to the NHS

The NHS offers a huge range of exciting and challenging opportunities for people who are passionate about making a difference.

With more than 350 different careers on offer, there is a job for you no matter what your interests, skills or qualifications.

What's more, as a doctor in the NHS, you'll be given every opportunity to build on your skills and learn new ones as part of your medical education and training. See the centre pages for more information about this.

Scientists, accountants, porters, psychologists, nurses, health informatics staff and estate managers, to name but a few, are all needed to ensure the smooth running of the NHS. These people, and many more, work together as a team to deliver the very best care for our patients.

To find out more about becoming a member of the NHS team, call 0345 60 60 655, email advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk or visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk

We look forward to hearing from you!

Contents

| | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|--|
| 2 | The NHS – a rewarding place to work Benefits Pay and conditions Work-life balance | 13 | What opportunities are available? Medical specialties Surgical specialties Other specialties |
| 6 | Your career in medicine | 17 | Getting started Values and behaviours Aptitude tests The Foundation Programme Funding |
| 10 | Medical education and training framework Developing your career in the NHS | 20 | What's your next step? |

Foreword

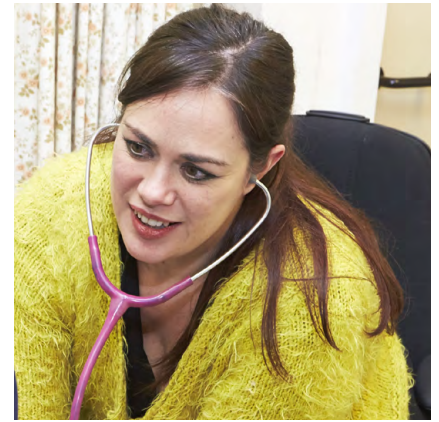
In this booklet you'll find out about the different medical careers available in the NHS. Becoming a doctor isn't an easy option – it takes years of study and hard work. As you develop the skills you need, you'll also learn a great deal about yourself.

If you like helping people, there are few careers as rewarding or respected. You'll be part of a team of professional medical and non-medical staff delivering care to the highest standards as part of a modern healthcare service.

If you have a passion for improving people's lives and the determination to reach the highest standards, you'll have a wide range of career opportunities. You can follow a path to one of many specialties, from working in a hospital as a surgeon, to being based in the community as a GP. The training and support available to you in the NHS can help you get to the very top of your chosen career.

For more information about working in medicine in the NHS, please visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/medicine or www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk

If you have any questions, call our helpline on 0345 60 60 655 or email advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk



The NHS – a rewarding place to work

There are very few careers as rewarding as one in the NHS, or that give you the opportunity to work with such a wide variety of people.

We actively recruit people of all ages, backgrounds and levels of experience. This helps us understand the different needs of the patients we serve every day and provide the best possible service.

Whichever area you join, you'll become part of a talented, passionate team of people who are committed to providing the best care and treatment to patients. You will also enjoy one of the most competitive and flexible benefits packages offered by any employer in the UK.

Benefits of working in the NHS

Everyone who joins the NHS is guaranteed a salary that matches their ability and responsibilities, and is given every opportunity to increase it through training and development.

On top of your basic salary, you will be entitled to 27 days' holiday (not including public holidays and statutory days) each year, plus a range of other benefits, including health and counselling services.

Join one of the UK's best pension schemes

The NHS Pension Scheme is one of the most generous and comprehensive in the UK. Every new employee automatically becomes a member and you will get an excellent package of pension benefits.

For more information about the pension, and a full list of the benefits included, please go to www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/payandbenefits

FULFIL YOUR POTENTIAL

- The NHS is committed to offering development and learning opportunities for all staff, whether working full-time or on a less than full-time contract.
- No matter where you start within the NHS, you'll have access to additional training and be given every chance to progress within the organisation.
- You will receive an annual personal review and development plan to support your career progression.
- While working as a doctor in training, you'll receive regular support from your local education and training board (LETB) to assess your clinical competencies and provide careers advice to support your progress towards full qualification as a doctor in the NHS.
- As part of your medical education and training, you will be encouraged to extend your range of skills and knowledge, and take on new responsibilities.

See page 10 for more information on medical education and training.

PAY AND CONDITIONS

As a foundation doctor you will work a 40-hour week, on top of which you may undertake various out-of-hours activities to support patient access to a 24-hour NHS. You will receive a basic salary for your 40 hours; any additional hours of work are allocated to pay bands and recognised by pay supplements, which are a percentage of your basic pay.

Foundation doctors should work an average of no more than 48 hours a week. Some of these hours may be worked as a shift at the weekend, evening or night, depending on what type of rota is in place. The days when doctors on call had to stay overnight in a hospital is becoming a thing of the past.

Hospital doctor grades

There is a variety of roles for doctors working within a hospital. Consultants are employed on national pay and terms and conditions of service. In addition to their basic salary, they may also receive other elements of pay, such as clinical excellence awards and an availability supplement during on-call periods. Specialty grade doctors also work on national pay and terms and conditions. Some doctors are employed as trust grade doctors on local terms and conditions of service.

General practitioners (GPs)

Most GPs are self-employed and hold contracts – either alone or in a partnership – with their local clinical commissioning group (CCG). The profit that a GP practice makes varies according to the services they provide for their patients and the way they choose to provide these services. It's this which determines GPs' pay. GPs can also opt to be salaried employees of a practice.

Changes to the healthcare system in England means that the NHS will need more GPs in the future and the number of training places is increasing. It is anticipated that up to 50% of all specialty training places in the future will be in general practice.

Benefits of working in the NHS include training, occupational health services, automatic membership of the NHS Pension Scheme (unless you choose to opt out) and a generous annual leave package.

To find out more about pay, and to see the most up-to-date salary information, go to www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/doctorspay



CASE STUDY

Name: Patrick Strong

Job title: consultant radiologist

Employer: Bolton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

When Patrick applied to medical school, he was looking for a career with variety. Radiology has lived up to his hopes and he has enjoyed the challenge of a rapidly changing profession.

I wanted to be a doctor from a very early age. One of the reasons I was attracted to the NHS was because my mother was a district nurse. I had a feeling that being a doctor was a career I would enjoy because I saw it as a career with variety – something it has certainly lived up to – and because I enjoyed my science subjects. I applied to medical school when I was 17. It was while I was a medical student that I became interested in radiology. I found that I really liked the investigative element.



Following jobs as a junior hospital doctor in South Wales, I worked in more senior roles in Bristol and Plymouth gaining the clinical experience necessary to be an effective radiologist.

I worked as a registrar, then senior registrar in Manchester before taking up my current role in Bolton.

The most satisfying aspect of the job is spotting a subtle sign on an x-ray and coming up with a diagnosis, especially if colleagues have not seen the answer.

Radiology has changed dramatically since I started and I have been able to keep up to date through training. For example, I recently trained for a year in nuclear medicine, one of the newer developments in my hospital.

Radiologists tend to specialise now, more so than in the past. When I first came to Bolton, there were four of us doing more or less the same kind of work, now there are 13 people with different special interests. Some concentrate on breast cancer, while others focus on vascular disease, bone disease and other conditions.

I had a feeling that being a doctor was a career I would enjoy because I saw it as a career with variety

Helping you find the right work-life balance

The NHS is committed to maintaining a healthy work-life balance for all NHS staff. There is a real focus on specific areas that are designed to make your life easier at certain times during your career. These include:

- flexible working and flexible retirement
- childcare provision and support for carers in the workplace
- coping with stress
- training and development
- tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Find out more about health and wellbeing at work at

www.nhsemployers.org/healthyworkplaces

Manage your commitments in and out of work

The size and diversity of the NHS means we can offer you a range of flexible working opportunities.

Training to be a doctor is a full-time commitment but we will do everything we can to help you combine your work for us with commitments in your everyday life – whether you're studying for a new qualification, raising a family or have other responsibilities.

Many people take an extended break to look after young children or other dependants who need special care, or to study full time.

We can help you combine your work for us with commitments in your everyday life

As well as advice and support for people looking after sick or elderly relatives, we may be able to provide a range of childcare services that are free for all NHS employees, including:

- nursery care
- after-school and breakfast clubs
- holiday play schemes
- emergency care.

Find out more about the benefits and opportunities offered by the NHS at
www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/payandbenefits



Your career in medicine

People become doctors for many different reasons but the most common theme is a desire to help others. At its simplest, medicine is about treating illness, providing advice and reassurance, and seeing the effects of both ill health and good health from the patient's point of view.

'Rewarding' is a word that often comes up when you ask doctors about their work. They'll also tell you that there is no such thing as a typical day – no two days are the same and no two patients are the same. Every day can test your knowledge and skills in new ways.



A career based on teamwork and opportunities

Doctors generally work as part of a larger healthcare team, alongside other professionals such as midwives, scientists and therapists. Sometimes doctors will lead a team of professionals, sometimes it will be led by another member of the healthcare team.

As a doctor, you will most likely work in the community or in a hospital. Once you have qualified, you could choose to follow an academic path, perhaps carrying out research to help improve our understanding of diseases and how to manage them, or to work in a laboratory. There will be a career in the NHS that matches your skills and your interests.

Whatever branch of medicine you choose, you will have to examine the symptoms presented by a patient, consider a range of possible diagnoses, test your diagnosis, decide on the best course of treatment and monitor your patient's progress.

A learning career

You'll need to be decisive since your judgment can be pivotal to a patient's wellbeing. You will continue to learn throughout your career about new techniques and ways to treat your patients whilst keeping up with research. You'll have the satisfaction of seeing people recover thanks to you and your colleagues. However, sometimes you will have to cope with knowing that even your best wasn't enough but you will be ready to further develop your skills and knowledge.

Contemporary medicine is challenging and exciting. With new discoveries making their impact on medical practice, doctors qualifying now will see even more dramatic changes in the future. Many new techniques are being developed, including those arising from research in genetics, electronics, nuclear physics and molecular biology.

No two days are the same and no two patients are the same. Every day can test your knowledge and skills

CASE STUDY

Name: Anu Raykundalia

Job title: community paediatric specialist registrar

Employer: Ealing Hospital NHS Trust

Building up relationships with children and their families brings Anu great rewards in her work. She also enjoys the benefits of working in a team.

Training to be a doctor really gives you the opportunity to explore different career possibilities. I went into medicine with the idea that I wanted to work with children. My training let me do this and helped me find my niche as a community paediatrician. I like being able to build up a relationship with children and their families. In hospital, you tend to work with children who have acute problems, maybe in emergency situations, but in the community it

is more common to deal with children with long-term conditions, such as cerebral palsy or behavioural problems. You see and treat the whole child, not just the 'sick' child.

Another satisfying aspect is that I work in a truly multidisciplinary team to provide the care that is needed. So, as well as other clinicians, there will be social workers, dietitians, health visitors and a range of other professionals sharing skills.

I think it is important to see the big picture, not just the illness. When I began my training, I was able to spend six months working in public health because I have an interest in prevention. That was in addition to my rotations in different aspects of paediatrics.

I really enjoy working with children. I still do some out-of-hours work in hospital and there you can get the instant reward of seeing an intervention work. With my work in the community, the rewards come from seeing changes over time with the families and children you have helped. It's very satisfying.



I like being able to build up a relationship with children and their families. You see and treat the whole child, not just the 'sick' child

A modern career

The role of a doctor has moved on a great deal in recent years. As well as a more even balance of men and women in medicine, there are more people taking up medical careers from other health professions and more opportunities for graduates and others who want to change their careers. Having three science A-levels is no longer the only way in.

Today there is a much greater emphasis on working with patients to improve their health. Gone are the days of 'doctor knows best' when patients were discouraged from asking any questions about their own health.

A flexible career

Careers in medicine are becoming more flexible. Today's NHS recognises the importance of a good balance between work and other things that are important to all of us, such as raising a family or taking a sabbatical to use your skills elsewhere in the world. The training programme for doctors supports taking a career break if you need one.

As a doctor you will have a career with a variety of opportunities. You will be continually meeting new challenges and having the satisfaction of helping people. It will be a busy life but never a boring one.

To find out more about the qualifications needed to work as a doctor in the NHS, visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/medicaltraining

Today's NHS recognises the importance of a good balance between work and other things that are important to all of us

What personal qualities will you need?

As a doctor you will need high personal and professional standards. The care of your patients will be your first concern and you will treat every patient considerately, respecting their dignity and privacy. You will take into consideration your patients' views without letting your personal beliefs affect their care.

You will be in tune with the NHS aim of putting patients at the heart of healthcare, so you will keep them informed and give them the chance to be involved in decisions about their care.

Self-awareness is another important quality in a doctor. You will know when you need to consult with your colleagues and you'll also be keen to keep your professional skills and knowledge up to date.

Who will it appeal to?

Different specialties will require different qualities, for example if you want to be a surgeon, you will need good manual dexterity, whilst psychiatrists need excellent communications skills, coupled with high-quality clinical skills. As you progress through your training, you will discover what suits you and what you are suited to.

Below are some of the necessary traits for people who want to work in medicine:

- a concern for people
- an enquiring and open mind
- a rational approach
- imaginative
- able to work under pressure
- able to sympathise and be non-judgmental
- hard working
- patient
- determined
- decisive
- an awareness of your own limitations.

CASE STUDY

Name: Dr Tanya Parry

Job title: GP registrar, Bradford NHS Foundation Trust

Entry route: Registered general nurse qualification, access to medicine course and medicine degree

Tanya started her NHS career as a nurse and decided to retrain as a doctor.

I started my career as a nurse in 1988 and worked in a variety of settings, starting in elderly care and later moving to A&E.

Working as a nurse in A&E meant I worked closely with GPs and I gained an interest in medicine. I thought about pursuing it as my next career move as I wanted a role that was varied, flexible and changed patients' lives. As a mother, the work/life balance being a GP offered was also an important factor.

I graduated with an Honours degree from Liverpool University in 2006. After completing my



foundation years, I entered general practice training in 2009 and worked in psychiatry, palliative care, paediatrics and A&E.

Retraining took some time but I thoroughly enjoyed my courses. It was interesting to learn the theory behind the tasks I'd seen the doctors perform in my years as a nurse.

My typical day starts at 7:45am and I complete my paperwork before the surgery opens at 8am. I see a number of patients til 5.30pm who present all sorts of conditions. Once I finish at the surgery, I do home visits and attend to patients over the phone. I also attend weekly teaching sessions.

Each patient brings a different challenge and I like that I can draw on my experience as a nurse. Treating patients and helping to keep them healthy is the most rewarding thing and I enjoy getting to know my patients and their families.

Being a GP is incredibly satisfying and I am very glad I decided to pursue it.

It was interesting to learn the theory behind the doctors' tasks

Medical education and training framework

Your career path as a doctor is guided by a medical education and training framework. There are certain stages that you must successfully complete to prove your competence as a clinician:

- Medical school education (four to six years depending on your qualifications)
- Foundation Programme Training (two years)
- Specialty training (varies depending on which route you take).

Training after medical school

During your final year at medical school, you can apply for a place on a two-year Foundation Programme which begins every August. During your time on the programme, you will work in a range of specialties in both hospital and community settings. Your abilities and competences will be assessed against national standards and you will have the chance to find out more about possible career options and build a wider appreciation of medicine and surgery before deciding on your chosen specialty.

Immediately prior to your Foundation Year 1 (FY1) training, you will be required to participate in a shadowing period. This will help you to become familiar with your new working environment and, where possible, should include a hand-over of clinical responsibilities.

F1 will often consist of three different four-month placements – ideally, one medicine, one surgery and one other specialty. Here you'll come into contact with a wide range of patients and gain experience of day-to-day care. You will have a supervisor and receive formal training based on a national curriculum, approved by the General Medical Council (GMC), for foundation doctors.

Foundation Year 2 (FY2) is usually made up of three further four-month placements. Many programmes include at least one placement in a specialty that may be experiencing a shortage of doctors, such as academic medicine, psychiatry or general practice, helping you make a decision about which specialty training programme you would like to pursue.

Training after Foundation Programme

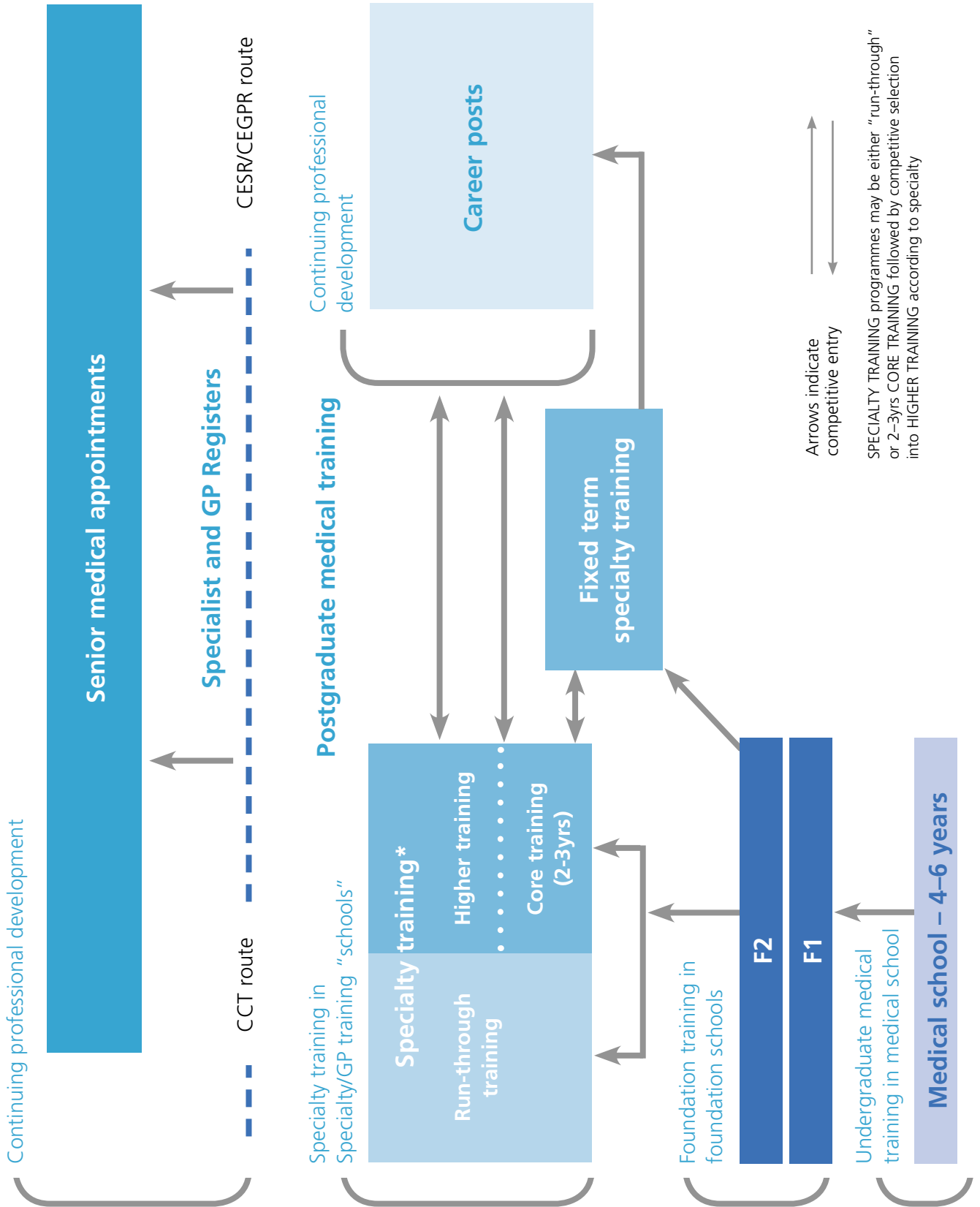
Following successful completion of your Foundation Programme, you will focus on a medical specialty, for example, palliative medicine. There are around 60 medical specialties that cover most of the conditions for which people are admitted to hospital. There are also other types of specialties that are concerned with people's health outside of hospital, such as general practice or psychiatry. As part of your specialty training choice, you should also consider whether you want to be part of an academic training programme or a public health programme.

Whichever route you take, all specialty training programmes lead to a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT), which qualifies you for entry to the Specialist Register or GP Register held by the GMC.

For more information about working and training as a doctor, visit
www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk



UK medical education and training framework



CASE STUDY

Name: Dr Tim Robbins

Job role: foundation year 2 (FY2) doctor

Employer: University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Tim was inspired to consider medicine by a biology teacher at school. Work experience in hospitals, hospices and nursing homes confirmed his decision to study to become a doctor. He is currently in the second year of his foundation training.

I currently work as a second year foundation doctor in acute and respiratory medicine. A typical day for me starts at 8am when I receive a handover of the patients who have been admitted overnight or current patients whose condition may have changed. I also review the test results for all my patients and complete a ward round either on my own or with a more senior doctor. Junior doctors spend a lot of time organising and marshalling the care of their

patients and getting this right can make a huge difference both to individual patients and the flow of the whole hospital!

I usually have lunch with my colleagues, as there is often some teaching put on at this time. My afternoons involve finishing off any ward jobs, writing to GPs about patients who've been discharged and helping the nurses with any problems on the ward. If the wards are quiet, I sometimes get the chance to go to clinic, work on a research project or prepare for postgraduate exams.

Medicine involves a curiosity of science, practical skills and the opportunity to not only engage with, but to transform people's lives. Medicine is a lifelong profession to which you both belong and continually learn from; there are few careers as varied.

Talking to patients is both a privilege and a delight. You can often make a diagnosis by just speaking to them and can make a huge difference to their stay in hospital by taking time to explore their feelings and engage with them and their family on a human level. When a patient you have taken the time to know and understand thanks you for your help before they leave hospital, you know you have done your job well.

Medicine is a lifelong profession that you both belong to and continually learn from



What opportunities are available?

There are currently over 60 different medical specialties and your training will give you the chance to find out which appeals to you most.

As your career develops, you are likely to specialise in a particular area. Once you have graduated from medical school, your two foundation years will give you a good grounding in general medicine, surgery and some specialist areas. You will be able to build up expertise so that you can give the best possible care to patients and get to the top of your profession.

In virtually every specialty you will work as a part of a

multidisciplinary team. Some require particular skills, such as an ability to make decisions in life-threatening situations or confidence with computers. Many require an interest in teaching or research whilst some need good manual dexterity.

This section gives a brief overview of the roles in each medical specialty.

For an up-to-date and comprehensive list of the different medical specialties, visit www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk/specialty_pages.aspx

Medical specialties

Medical specialties cover many of the conditions for which people are admitted to hospital. They are concerned with the science and practice of the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease. There are currently more than 60 medical specialties and sub-specialties and the following list will give you an idea what's involved in some of them.

- **Medical oncology** is solely concerned with treating cancer. There is a great deal of contact with patients and their relatives. Medical oncologists are physicians who specialise in non-surgical treatment of cancer. Their role is to discuss the treatment options with patients and their families, supervise the therapy and manage any complications that arise.
- **Medical ophthalmology** is the management of conditions of the eye and visual system. You will be involved in the care of eye conditions in patients of all ages, from premature babies to elderly people. Some people may have eye conditions as part of a systemic disease such as diabetes. Most ophthalmologists provide both surgical and medical eye care but some choose to specialise in medical ophthalmology.
- **Palliative medicine** supports patients with life-threatening, advanced progressive illnesses that can't be cured by conventional medicine. Doctors working in palliative medicine help to manage a patient's symptoms and provide psychological, social and spiritual support.

Surgical specialties

Surgeons specialise in operating on particular parts of the body to address specific injuries, diseases or degenerative conditions. Advances in anaesthesia have enabled surgeons to perform longer and more complex operations, whilst innovation in areas such as keyhole surgery means that less-invasive surgical techniques are also being developed.

As with medical specialties, there is a range of sub-specialties for surgery, including those listed below.

- **Cardiothoracic surgery** deals with the diagnosis and management of surgical conditions of the heart, lungs and oesophagus. A small aspect of the specialty is the transplantation of both heart and lungs, which is performed in a few specialised centres in England.
- **Neurosurgery** deals with the nervous system. It includes operative and non-operative procedures, intensive-care management and rehabilitation of patients with disorders affecting the brain and skull, spine and nervous system.
- **Ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgery otolaryngology** has more separate surgical procedures than most other surgical disciplines put together. There is a large number of conditions for which surgery of the ear, nose and throat will be required. The procedures range from removing tonsils to the treatment of head and neck cancer. They also include surgery for snoring problems, the removal of nasal polyps and surgery to correct nasal deformities caused by injuries. An ENT surgeon may also treat infants with hearing problems and older people who may be losing their hearing.

Other specialties

- **Anaesthetics** is experiencing huge advances in science and techniques, making longer and more complex surgical procedures possible. More procedures are also being completed using regional anaesthesia instead of general anaesthesia. As an anaesthetist, you will be an essential member of the team providing expert care to patients before, during and after surgery. Anaesthetists also lead teams in the specialist areas of pain medicine and the intensive care management of critically ill patients.
- **Emergency medicine** is the only hospital-based specialty where a complete range of illness and injury is managed. Doctors specialising in emergency medicine are generalists but specialise in resuscitation. A number of doctors also develop their own sub-specialty interests, such as trauma. It is an area that attracts those who enjoy immediate decision-making.
- **General practice** is the first point of contact with the NHS for most people. It is the 'gateway' to the NHS – you will decide whether a patient needs to be referred for further treatment or investigation. Most of your work will be carried out during consultations in the surgery and on home visits. No other specialty offers such a wide remit and range of conditions to treat.

Increasingly, you'll be working in teams with other professionals such as psychiatrists or public health specialists, helping patients take responsibility for their own health. There are now more opportunities for GPs to specialise in particular conditions, such as diabetes, asthma or dermatology, and to become more involved in hospital work, for example as a clinical assistant. General practice gives you the opportunity to prevent illness, not just treat it.

Other specialties (continued)

- **Obstetrics and gynaecology** is the specialty that covers the care of pregnant women, unborn children and the management of diseases specific to women. As well as being involved in clinical procedures, you will have opportunities to work closely with the community. This specialty allows you to work in both medicine and surgery. In obstetrics, you will look after women who are going through one of the most important events in their life – having a baby. In gynaecology, you can make a real difference to women with a range of problems, from difficulty getting pregnant to gynaecological cancers.
- **Paediatrics** offers a varied career ranging from high technology neonatal and paediatric intensive care, to the management of a disabled child. You may be responsible for organising preventative services in the community or treating a child with cancer. It's a holistic specialty, in which you focus on the child within a family and work to minimise the adverse effect of disease, enabling them to live as normal a life as possible.
- **Pathology** specialises in the detection of disease through a variety of investigative techniques, such as blood tests and biopsy. Your work can be vital in finding an accurate and early diagnosis and improving prospects for treatment. You'll also play an important role in identifying the sources of disease and reducing the risks of further spread.
- **Psychiatry** specialises in the care of patients with mental disorders. Psychiatrists usually specialise in a particular branch of psychiatry. These include specialties across all ages, such as child and adolescent psychiatry, general (adult) psychiatry or old age psychiatry. The specialist areas of psychiatry include learning disability, forensic psychiatry, medical psychotherapy, liaison psychiatry, rehabilitation and social psychiatry, substance misuse, perinatal psychiatry, neuropsychiatry and eating disorders.
- **Public health medicine** deals with the medical aspects of public health practice and aims to improve the health of the community. Public health physicians tend to be concerned with the wider population's health needs rather than those of individual patients. As a public health specialist, you could be carrying out research into the health of your local population and devise programmes to tackle problems, or develop and deliver health programmes with other organisations, such as local councils. You will look at areas such as health inequalities, helping to close the gap between the least and most healthy communities.
- **Radiology** specialises in the detection of disease and every radiological investigation is a diagnostic challenge. You might carry out simple investigative techniques or make decisions that are extremely complicated, such as those based on inconclusive images from a scan. Nevertheless, the interpretation of any image presents a medical and intellectual challenge.

Radiologists work closely with clinical colleagues, such as the team of staff that looks after the care of a cancer patient, as well as being responsible for the management of the imaging departments. Interventional radiologists carry out a variety of minimal invasive procedures on patients, such as inserting stents.

For more details about the different careers you can pursue as a doctor, visit www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk

CASE STUDY

Name: Deenesh Khoosal

Job title: consultant psychiatrist

Employer: Brandon Mental Health Unit, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust

Deenesh enjoys working in a multi-disciplinary team. His personal qualities, combined with his skills and knowledge, have proven vital in a challenging profession.

I made up my mind at an early age that I wanted to be a psychiatrist. As soon as I qualified as a doctor, I began my postgraduate training. I have been a psychiatrist at a time of tremendous change. When I started my career, old-style Victorian institutions were still commonplace. They have been closed and replaced by modern residential services. The big change has been in the development of community-based services, where we aim to see patients in, or as close to, their own homes as possible. Some of the



changes have been made possible by the advances in our knowledge. For example, when I started, only a few drugs were available. Now, they are much better and have fewer side-effects.

My work benefits from the involvement of the multidisciplinary team with which I work. The team consists of psychiatrists, community psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, pharmacists and many others. This is a positive step as no single person can hope to meet all the needs of patients.

It can be a challenging job, for example, sometimes I have to detain a patient against their will. Training and experience gives you the confidence to balance the patient's interests with those of the public.

I need to have good listening skills and empathy, as I work with patients who have a wide range of problems. Another thing I like in psychiatry, is that diagnosis is based on talking to people – skills and knowledge count because you can't call for a blood test to help you!

The most satisfying part of my job is to see patients improving. It is so rewarding to see this happen and to know that you have been able to make a difference to their lives.

The most satisfying part of my job is seeing patients improving

Getting started

If you are considering a career as a doctor, you will have to start out at a medical school. Each of these schools is part of a university and will also have close links with hospitals and GP practices for medical learning, clinical teaching and scientific research.

Values and behaviours

If you decide to deliver NHS healthcare, whatever role you come into, you'll need to show your understanding of the NHS values and behaviours, which are part of the NHS Constitution.

Read more about the NHS Constitution
www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/nhsconstitution

Excellent A-level grades (or the equivalent) are needed for most student places. However, medical schools will consider people with other attributes and skills that support their application. Evidence of scientific ability and the capacity for study are vitally important and most medical schools require science subjects at A-level. A few medical schools offer one-year pre-medical courses for students without science qualifications at level 3. Some further education colleges run an Access to Medicine course, which aims to bring students who have not studied for some time up to speed on relevant scientific knowledge before they begin a medical course.

Some medical schools offer accelerated graduate-entry courses lasting four years. With this type of course, medical schools can give credit to part of a student's prior learning. Some medical schools require applicants to hold a science-based degree, while others consider graduates in any subject.

After university, you will have what is referred to as a first MB degree.

It is essential that you check the entry requirements for each medical school well before making any applications.

Use our course finder to search for universities offering degree in courses in medicine
www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/courses

Aptitude tests

The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) is used in the selection process by a consortium of university medical and dental schools in the UK. The test has been designed to help universities to make more informed choices from among the many highly qualified applicants who apply for medical degree programmes.

Some medical schools use other aptitude tests such as the BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT) or the Graduate Australian Medical Schools Admissions Test (GAMSAT).

These tests ensure that the candidates selected have the mental abilities, values, and professional behaviours required for new doctors and dentists to be successful in their clinical careers. They do not contain any curriculum or science content; nor can they be revised for. They focus on exploring the cognitive powers of candidates as well as other attributes considered valuable for healthcare professionals.

The Foundation Programme

Once you have finished medical school, you will participate in a period of shadowing and then enter a two-year Foundation Programme. After successfully completing this programme, you will be able to apply for a GP training programme or specialty, which can lead you to becoming a GP or consultant.

You will receive provisional registration from the General Medical Council (GMC) upon graduating from your medical school, and will qualify for full registration once you have successfully completed the first foundation year (F1). Doctors must be registered with the GMC to practise medicine in the UK.

You will then commence your second year of foundation training (F2) and, once completed, you will receive a Foundation Achievement of Competency Document (FACD), and can apply for higher training positions to become a GP or a consultant. The FACD represents formal certification of attainment of foundation competences. This will be an important part of your clinical credentials in the future.

The Foundation Programme has been designed to enable you to gain competences in core clinical

skills, as well as other professional skills, such as communication and teamwork. It won't be enough to just understand the principles of these competences though – you'll have to show that you know how to use them in your day-to-day delivery of clinical care. You will be regularly assessed via methods such as direct observation of procedural skills (DOPS) and you will be required to keep a record of these in a personal portfolio.

Funding

NHS Student Bursaries provide bursary funding for eligible students training to be doctors, from part way through their medical degree. The amount you receive depends on your individual circumstances.

You can find out more by visiting the NHS Student Bursaries website at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students

Speak to your careers adviser or contact NHS Careers on [0345 60 60 655](tel:03456060655) or by emailing advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk to find out more.

For more information about training as a doctor in the NHS, visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/medicaltraining



CASE STUDY

Name: Dr Francesca Kum

Job Title: Senior House Officer (SHO) / junior doctor in ENT

Francesca was interested in medicine from a young age and at school she always preferred the sciences and maths subjects to humanities.

I graduated from King's College London Medical School in 2012 and my two years of foundation training provided all-round experience in breast/general surgery, cardiology, acute medicine, ear nose and throat (ENT) surgery, urology and emergency medicine. I have chosen to train in surgery and would like to specialise in either ENT or urology.

Depending on the rota, an ENT SHO is assigned to one of three jobs: being on call, or working in an outpatient clinic or theatre. The on call shift generally runs from 8am to



8.30pm and I see patients referred from A&E, other specialties and GPs, as well as patients on the wards.

On clinic days I join the ward round at 8am and go to clinic for 9am, finishing at around 5pm. Theatre days are busy too. Guy's Hospital is a tertiary head and neck cancer centre so we see patients for very complex procedures, as well as routine cases. Complex operations are often performed by surgeons from a number of different specialties and can take all day.

I have always been drawn to surgery as a 'craft' specialty and the creative aspects of surgery allow me to see the outcomes of my 'handiwork'. ENT is an extremely varied specialty and my role has given me the opportunity to work on the ward, see patients independently in clinic and attend theatre lists.

If you're considering a career in medicine, it's a very long road ahead, but ask questions, be curious and enjoy the journey!

My two years of foundation training provided all-round experience

What's your next step?

We hope you've found this booklet useful and have a better idea of whether a career as a doctor is right for you.

The starting point for your career as a doctor is your university application. The selection panel will look for evidence of your motivation and commitment. So it is a good idea for you to get some practical work experience in healthcare before you apply. This will also help you find out if this is really what you want to do.

You apply to medical school through UCAS, including accelerated graduate-entry courses. Each

medical school publishes its own prospectus, which describes the structure of the courses and the learning methods. Compare them to decide which will suit you best.

Whatever position you're in now, the NHS Careers service can help. Call us on 0345 60 60 655, email advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk or visit our website at www.nhscareers.nhs.uk

For a list of the different medical schools and the courses they offer, visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/courses



Here are some other things you can be doing, depending on where you are right now.
For contact details, please visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/medicinecontacts

| Where are you now? | What should you do now? | Who can help? |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Studying for GCSEs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit www.stepintothens.nhs.uk and register for more information on chosen careers. • Check what your likely exam grades/results will be. • Are there any particular skills or experience that will improve your chances of getting into your chosen career? • Enquire about volunteering or work experience. • Find out if you need any specific A-levels, or equivalent qualifications. | <p>Subject teachers Your careers adviser/ Connexions service Professional bodies NHS Careers National Careers Service</p> |
| <p>Studying for A-levels or another course at your school or a local college</p> | <p>As GCSEs, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate which universities have medical schools and compare the courses on offer. • Find out if specific subjects are required. Do you need sciences or are there options to enter with non-science subjects and take a one-year pre-medical course first? • Investigate any further qualifications or skills you might need for your chosen role. • Find out about financial support from Student Finance England and NHS Student Bursaries. | <p>Subject teachers Your careers adviser/ Connexions service UCAS NHS Careers Professional bodies NHS Student Bursaries Medical Careers website National Careers Service</p> |
| <p>At university</p> | <p>As A-levels, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate which medical schools will accept graduate applicants for their accelerated programmes, and which degree subjects they will consider. | <p>University careers service NHS Careers Professional bodies Medical Careers website National Careers Service</p> |
| <p>Looking for a new career</p> | <p>As A-levels, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate fast-track medical courses if you already have a degree. • If you left education some time ago, investigate what evidence medical schools will require to consider you as a potential applicant (e.g. an Access to Medicine course or alternative). | <p>Careers/Connexions service (you may have to pay to use these services) NHS Careers Professional bodies UCAS NHS Student Bursaries Medical Careers website National Careers Service</p> |

FOR FURTHER COPIES OF THIS BOOKLET PLEASE CONTACT:

NHS Careers

PO Box 27079

Glasgow G3 9EJ

Tel: 0345 60 60 655

Email: advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk

www.nhscareers.nhs.uk

15k May15

**NHSCB04 May 2015
© Crown Copyright 2015**

