Caring, compassionate, committed
Make a difference with a career in health
A career for you

There are more than 350 roles in health, and many of them are part of a wider team which works alongside other health professionals for the benefit of patients and the public. As well as the NHS itself, a great many large and smaller organisations provide healthcare and work to prevent ill health in the UK. These include public and private sector organisations, community interest companies, social enterprises and charities, and you could work for the NHS or any one of these other organisations in a health role.

Some roles give you direct contact with patients, while in others you are part of a vast support network vital to delivering healthcare and preventing ill health, and good team-working is essential. Some jobs are in hospitals, others are based in the community: increasingly, health and social care services are integrated or co-ordinated in order to provide a seamless service for people with a range of needs.

We actively recruit people of all ages, backgrounds and levels of experience, including people who have worked in other sectors or who bring life experience from outside the world of work. This helps us to understand the different needs of patients, families and carers, and to provide the best possible service every day.

NHS values and the 6Cs of compassionate care

To apply for any job in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services, or for a course with clinical placements in the NHS, you’ll need to show how you think the values of the NHS Constitution would apply in your everyday work.

The NHS Constitution values are:

- Working together for patients
- Respect and dignity
- Commitment to quality of care
- Compassion
- Improving lives
- Everyone counts

These values may also be promoted as the 6Cs of compassionate care, which are:

- Care
- Compassion
- Competence
- Communication
- Courage
- Commitment

Find out more about the NHS Constitution and the 6Cs at:

- www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/nhsconstitution
- www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/xCs
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What is midwifery?

Midwives often describe their job as ‘privileged’. The role they have in preparing women for the birth of a new life makes them a key healthcare professional during all stages of pregnancy, labour and the early postnatal period.

The care and expertise provided by midwives is invaluable to the thousands of women and their families who use their services in clinics, hospitals and at home while pregnant, throughout labour and during the period after a baby’s birth.

As well as the satisfaction it brings, the role is demanding and carries a high level of responsibility. Midwives work in all healthcare settings in a variety of ways, providing women and their families with choices and continuity of care.

Becoming a midwife means undertaking professional education at degree level. Some midwives are qualified nurses who have chosen to change career direction and undertaken the necessary extra study. Others work their way up via a range of routes before going on to study for a registered midwifery degree. Some begin their midwifery career after a first career in an unrelated field.

Midwives working in modern healthcare must be able to demonstrate the values and behaviours of the 6Cs: committed; caring; courageous; compassionate; competent; and have excellent communication skills.

There are few professions that offer so much in terms of job satisfaction and support, as well as giving you the chance to enhance people’s lives during their times of need.
FAQs

How do I train to become a midwife?

You’ll need to take an approved course in midwifery. Have a look at the Getting started in midwifery section on page 16. You can search for approved courses in midwifery using our course finder: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/courses

What qualifications do I need to train as a midwife?

Each university sets its own entry requirements to get onto a full-time degree in midwifery, but as a general guide you’ll need at least 5 A-C grade GCSEs (including English and a science subject) and at least 2 (preferably 3) A-levels (some universities may require biology).

Alternative qualifications at level 3, such as an approved access to midwifery course, BTEC or International Baccalaureate may be acceptable, but you must check with each university directly before applying.

Do I need to be a nurse before I can train as a midwife?

No, you do not need to be a nurse first - although this is one of the routes into the profession.

Can I do an apprenticeship in midwifery?

No, you cannot do an apprenticeship to become a midwife. Some healthcare organisations run apprenticeships in health and social care which may provide you with sufficient experience and qualifications to be able to apply for a pre-registration degree in midwifery.


I want to work with babies, so would I make a good midwife?

Having a love of babies is clearly important, but as a midwife, your main role will be monitoring the unborn baby and expectant mother while providing advice and support.

If you want to have more contact with babies, you might want to consider roles such as a newborn hearing screener, maternity support worker, healthcare assistant or neonatal nurse. There is information about all these roles at: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles

Is there financial help to support me while I train?

If you are taking a full-time pre-registration midwifery course in England, you will usually be eligible for a student loan to pay for tuition and maintenance fees. Arrangements are different outside of England.

Visit the NHS Student Bursaries website for more information: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk
Your career as a midwife

As a midwife, you’ll mainly deal with women who are healthy but require professional support and advice to help them throughout pregnancy, labour and the postnatal period.

If there are no complications, you will be the lead health professional and contact for a woman, providing evidence-based information and helping her make informed choices about the options and services available throughout her pregnancy and labour.

Midwives work as part of a multidisciplinary healthcare team that includes hospital doctors such as obstetricians, GPs, other midwives, health visitors, neonatal nurses and support staff. However, midwives also work alone.

Midwives are experts and lead other healthcare professionals during normal childbirth.

The responsibilities of midwives are diverse. You’ll provide full antenatal care, including parenting classes, clinical examinations and screening, identify high-risk pregnancies, monitor women and support them during labour and the birthing process. You will also teach new and expectant mothers how to feed, care for and bathe their babies before handing over their ongoing care to a health visitor between ten days and one month after the baby’s birth.

Your clients

A midwife’s client base often includes women from a variety of backgrounds and you will need to be confident enough to communicate with different people. Some women and their families will have challenging circumstances – they may be homeless, socially excluded, have disabilities or be very young, in which case you may need to liaise with social services. Other clients may be from certain cultural or religious backgrounds, where high levels of empathy and intuition are important.

Regardless of their situation, all women need their midwife to understand the emotional, physical and psychological processes of pregnancy and birth.

When pregnancies do not go to plan, it will be up to the midwife to offer support and advice following events such as stillbirth, miscarriage, termination, neonatal death and neonatal abnormalities. Often, midwives – especially those based in the community – will develop good professional relationships with their clients due to the continuity of care involved, which makes counselling easier at difficult times.

There are some short videos about midwifery on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/Healthcareers
Where you’ll work

Midwives work in a variety of healthcare settings. Antenatal care is provided in the community - in women’s homes, local clinics, children’s centres and GP surgeries. There is also the option to be hospital based, where there are plenty of opportunities for midwives to work in antenatal departments, including triage and assessment areas, high and low risk labour, postnatal wards and neonatal units. Care during labour is provided in the home birth setting, in Alongside Midwifery Units (AMUs) and Freestanding Midwifery Units (FMUs) which are all midwife-led.

By its nature, midwifery is not a nine-to-five job. Midwives often work within a rota and an on-call rota to provide 24-hour care at the woman’s home as well as in hospital.

“That personal fulfilment, having helped a mother to give birth, is tremendous.”
Melvin Wilkinson, labour ward manager
Woman-centred care

Midwifery services are women and family centered and care is increasingly moving from hospital to a community-based environment. Where you work will reflect that and depend on the model of care provided by the maternity service. So it could be care that is integrated with birth centres, you might have your own caseload, or be part of a more traditional hospital service with a team of community midwives.

Your career options

Your midwifery qualifications and experience will provide a wide range of options to develop your career in the areas that interest you most. As your knowledge and expertise increase, you could move into more senior practitioner roles such as consultant midwife, to provide clinical leadership for midwives and other healthcare professionals. Becoming a team or unit manager, you could combine responsibility for managing other staff with ongoing hands-on involvement with clients. This could then lead to further influential roles such as head of midwifery and director of midwifery services.

Specialising

You may choose to specialise in a particular area of perinatal care and study for further qualifications, which may involve carrying out research to help move the profession forward. You could undertake further study to become a midwife teacher and work at a university, teaching future midwives.

Your career could well move through different elements of research, teaching, practice development and management – including management at board level within an NHS trust or other healthcare provider, influencing the shape of healthcare across a whole community. Find out more about management roles in our Careers in management booklet.

Other professions

You could also move into other professions, including neonatal nursing or health visiting. Neonatal nurses have a clinical focus on the treatment and care of women and babies with health complications around birth, for example, helping premature babies to get through the critical first few days after they are born.

Health visitors work with families at home and in the community, promoting good health with particular attention on young children. In effect, they take over where the community midwife’s role ends, and have a wider concern with the circumstances in which a young child is growing up.

For more information about career opportunities for midwives, neonatal nurses and health visitors, visit the Health Careers website at: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles
Real-life stories
Midwife

Name
Sue Jones

Job title
Midwife, Bloomsbury Birthing Centre, University College London Hospitals (UCLH) NHS Foundation Trust

Entry route
Degree in midwifery

How I got into the role

After studying for my degree in midwifery, I did the last half of my training at UCLH and then joined as a community midwife. For the last year, I have been working at the birthing centre.

What I do

As well as caring for mothers during labour and birth, I am also there to help them during the early postnatal period.

The midwives who have inspired me in my career are all excellent communicators and decision makers. To be a midwife, you cannot be a shrinking violet. A mother needs to know that you will take control of a situation.

Midwifery is hard work and not all experiences are wonderful. On these occasions, it is important for colleagues to be supportive and then any situation is workable. The women we look after are very important to us, but they also pass quite quickly through our working lives.

A work colleague and friend recently said to me that a working day can be very different, depending on who you’re working with. My colleagues are caring and understanding which makes such a difference.

The best bits

There have been some fantastic experiences in my time as a midwife. It’s an incredibly intimate time and sometimes it amazes me just how quick and easy it is to build up a rapport with a woman in labour. One that always sticks in the mind was when a mother who had given birth at home came into the birthing centre with a thank you card. It brought back lovely memories of a wonderful and emotional birth.

“Midwifery can be brutal and beautiful in equal measures.”
Name
Gemma Sayer

Job title
Midwife, Airedale NHS Foundation Trust

Entry route
Nursery assistant, healthcare support worker, degree in midwifery

How I got into the role

Working for 12 years on the maternity unit at Airedale NHS Foundation Trust was where I found my passion for midwifery. I started out as a nursery assistant, helping to care for the children on the unit, and then moved to a healthcare assistant role in the maternity unit where I supported the midwives and helped in theatres during Caesarean sections and other assisted deliveries. I also completed my NVQ levels 2 and 3 in care.

I was keen to develop my midwifery skills and knowledge so I did an access [to university] course part-time, which included getting my English and maths GCSEs. The course gave me enough UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) points to do a midwifery degree at the University of Bradford.

What I do

I qualified and registered as a midwife in 2013 and, as part of a multidisciplinary obstetric and midwifery team, I provide holistic, client-centred and culturally sensitive care to women and their families during labour and birth. I also care for women ante and postnatally, communicating effectively to provide the health education information they need.

The best bits

I love providing support to women and their families during this life-changing event and helping to enhance their experience of pregnancy and childbirth. I am privileged to work with women from all backgrounds and enjoy supporting them as they adjust to life as a family according to their family’s culture and beliefs.

I feel passionate about midwifery and look forward to developing my skills and knowledge further now I’m qualified. My aim is to excel in each area of midwifery so that I’m giving the best care possible.
Divisional director of operations

Name
Karen Baker

Job title
Divisional director of operations for unscheduled care, Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust

Entry route
Nursing and midwifery course

How I got into the role
When I started my career, you had to train as a nurse before becoming a midwife. But early on I realised that midwifery appealed to me most. You care holistically for people and the diagnosis and care plan you prepare is your own work. The work itself is exciting: you’re helping bring a new life into the world. There are emergency situations that get the adrenalin flowing, as well as complex cases to stretch your knowledge and skills. There’s a lot of fun, too.

I never planned the career I’ve had. I think I’ve always wanted to do a job to the best of my ability, and when I feel I’ve reached that level, thought: ‘what more could I do to make a bigger difference?’

What I do
I spent ten years in a variety of hospital and community midwifery posts before becoming a delivery suite manager. Since then I have been a head of midwifery services, a general manager, associate director of midwifery and nursing services, care group manager for obstetrics and gynaecology, and divisional director of operations for women and children, before taking on my present role.

Now I’m the manager responsible for the emergency department, cancer care and medicine and elderly care at a major hospital trust, with more than 1,100 staff and a budget of £62 million.

I have also been a council member with the Royal College of Midwives, taught on university courses and been involved in various national policy-making and review groups.

The best bits
I guess I like a challenge – even more as my career has developed and I have seen the many challenges posed by advances in treatment and rising expectations. I have been given the opportunity and support to develop my leadership abilities.

Honestly, I can’t think of any career that beats being in the NHS. You are working alongside amazing people who are deeply committed to what they’re doing. The job satisfaction can’t be matched. You really are changing people’s lives and there are so many different directions you can take. You’re almost certain to find the thing that lights you up.
How I got into the role

I worked in various public and private sector organisations after my English and psychology degree, but it was a spell in South America and some voluntary work abroad that inspired me to pursue a midwifery career.

I qualified as a midwife in September 2012 and am currently in a rotational post so I can build up my skills in providing care to both low and high risk women and their families. I’ve worked on the labour ward, in the midwife-led birthing centre, and on both antenatal and postnatal wards.

What I do

On the labour ward, I helped promote ‘normality’ during high risk deliveries and, supported by senior staff, have been able to empower women in the birthing centre to achieve a variety of birthing experiences such as water births and delivery in different positions. I am currently working on the antenatal and postnatal ward. The experience is further consolidating my skills in providing holistic care within a team made up of paediatricians, obstetricians, diabetic nurses, physiotherapists, social workers and neonatal nurses, to name but a few.

A typical day involves receiving a handover from the previous shift with a history summary of each woman and baby. This includes following up anything from feeding issues and test results to working with the doctors to arrange scans, and handling any social issues. I’m currently on a ward that specialises in caring for diabetic women so I work closely with our diabetic team and obstetricians.

Postnatal care involves both ensuring mothers are physically well and providing support for their emotional wellbeing and development of their family – everything from providing feeding support and baby bath demonstrations to liaising with social workers.

The best bits

I really enjoy coming to work and making a difference, in particular supporting and empowering women to make their own decisions and choices in their transition to parenthood.
Labour ward lead/manager

Name
Melvin Wilkinson

Job title
Labour ward lead/manager,
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust

Entry route
After working as a registered nurse

How I got into the role

I was a business studies student when a friend who worked as an A&E nurse encouraged me to look into nursing because I asked so many questions about her job.

As a nurse, I worked in various medical wards for a year but I enjoyed obstetrics most, so I decided to embark on a midwifery course. I studied for a diploma* in midwifery and have never looked back – I’ve just kept taking on more roles and doing more study.

After qualifying, I worked as a bank midwife at St Hellier Hospital, Surrey, while studying for a degree in health service management. I then spent a further three years as a senior midwife.

I then moved into a charge midwife post, where I coordinated services at ward level and took on other challenges in theatre – scrubbing for Caesarean sections and so on.

What I do

My role is that of labour ward lead/ward manager. My job is twofold – a ward manager for three days plus two days’ hands-on clinical work.

I am very open when I approach patients, and have delivered babies from different religions and cultures. If a woman prefers a female midwife, that’s fine and her choice must be respected.

During my career, on a few occasions, I’ve been in a labour ward where women have requested to be attended by male practitioners only. On one occasion my being there encouraged a partner to stay and witness his child being born. His expression was, “thank goodness for your presence, I thought I was going to be the only man in this room”.

The best bits

It is always lovely to be there when a baby is born and see the parents very happy. That personal fulfilment, having helped a mother to give birth, is tremendous. It is very rewarding to be with families at such an eventful time.

*Midwifery diplomas are no longer available. You now need to take an approved degree in midwifery.
**Name**
Eleri Bates

**Job title**
Midwife, University College London Hospitals (UCLH) NHS Foundation Trust

**Entry route**
Degree in fine art, followed by a midwifery degree

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**How I got into the role**

I graduated with a fine art degree but wanted a career with a more caring capacity. I was offered a job at the hospital where I trained as a midwife but chose UCLH in the end because I wanted to expand my experience. For the first year, I worked on rotation which included the labour ward, birth centre, triage, close observation bay (high dependency unit/recovery) and community midwifery. That gave me a brilliant overview of all the departments in the maternity unit and I’m now permanent on the labour ward.

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**What I do**

Our unit has a birth centre for low risk births, so on my labour ward we mainly have the high risk women who have existing medical conditions, complications with their pregnancy or babies where problems are anticipated.

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I generally have one woman to look after at a time throughout her labour and birth. Because we do 12-hour shifts, you get to know the mums quite well and that’s a very rewarding part of the job.

Labour and birth can include anything from self-hypnosis and birthing pools to epidurals, drips and operating theatres. A key part of the job is trying to accommodate individual plans and requests which can be challenging!

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**The best bits**

I like being able to apply scientific knowledge, emotional and physical care and a bit of creative thinking all at once.

Experiencing the birth of a baby as part of your day job is incredible. But, there are other rewarding moments throughout the day too like sharing some advice or information that is important to that particular individual: it gives you the feeling that you’ve improved things for someone, whether in a big or small way.
Getting started in midwifery

To work as a midwife in the UK, you must be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). To register, you must have completed a pre-registration training programme in midwifery that is approved by the NMC.

Midwifery training programmes are all at degree level and students must pass all the theory and practice assessments and meet the good health and good character standard before being able to register and work as a midwife in the UK. When it comes to working in the NHS, wherever you start, you can be assured of practical, and possibly financial, support as you progress.

Work placements and volunteering

Doing volunteer work or arranging a work placement is the best way to find out if a health profession is right for you. It will give you experience of the working environment, show you the kind of work you would be doing and the people you would be helping, and let you talk with people who are already doing the job.

The number and type of work placements or volunteering opportunities available vary, depending on where you are in the country. Experience doesn’t always need to be gained in the NHS either, so think about the independent health sector, charities and other organisations where you could provide care for people as a way of gaining experience.

For more information about opportunities in your area, talk to your local health provider and voluntary organisations. You can also find more information on gaining experience at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/experience

For information about training and working as a midwife, visit www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/midwifery
Apprenticeships

Some NHS organisations offer apprenticeships in health and social care, enabling apprentices to enter placements at support worker level for around two years, while giving them the opportunity to work towards a relevant vocational qualification.

Although apprenticeships will enable you to work towards a vocational qualification, it will not count towards professional midwifery training. Instead, an apprenticeship aims to get you to the appropriate level so that you can apply to study a midwifery degree at the end of your apprenticeship.

Support workers/assistants

Maternity support workers and healthcare assistants often don’t need recognised qualifications to do their jobs, but training and development of all staff is very important. Gaining experience and appropriate vocational qualifications while working can be a stepping stone to more senior support roles, for example as an assistant practitioner. It can also lead to further study if they wish to pursue a career in midwifery. Those who have worked in the NHS and have the academic ability to cope with the demands of a professional midwifery programme will find that their experience is an advantage when they apply for a place on a midwifery degree course.

Staff in midwifery support roles may be supported by their employer to study for a foundation degree. This tends to be a part-time qualification, often run in conjunction with further education colleges. The foundation course lasts for two years and would need to be followed by professional midwifery training (see the next section) to train as a midwife. People on foundation degrees are normally employed by an NHS trust.

For more information, about clinical support worker roles, visit www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/clinicalsupportstaff

To search for jobs in your local area, visit www.jobs.nhs.uk
Professional training

Midwifery programmes are available at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. After completing your degree, you must register with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) before you can practise.

Undergraduate degree

To train as a midwife, you’ll need to successfully complete an approved pre-registration programme in midwifery at a university. All applicants must be numerate, literate and of good character and good health. Pre-registration degree courses in midwifery are usually three years long and comprise 50 per cent academic study and 50 per cent supervised work placements in hospitals and the community.

There are no national standard entry requirements for midwifery degrees. It is up to each university to decide what they want to accept, but on the whole, degree programmes usually require applicants to have a minimum of five good GCSEs and at least two A-levels or equivalent, one of which should preferably be a science subject. In reality, most applicants will have 3 A-levels or equivalent qualifications.

If you have no formal educational qualifications and/or did your secondary education some time ago, you can take an Access to Higher Education course which teaches skills around study and confidence in how to deal with the academic demands of a university course. Access courses tend to be run by further education colleges around the country and are often linked to a specific university course.

In such cases, you may be interviewed by someone from the college as well as the university. You may be guaranteed a place on the university course on successful completion of an Access course.

You should always check what each university requires before embarking on an Access or other course.

Accelerated training for registered nurses

Registered nurses can undertake a shortened programme (typically 18 months) to qualify as midwives.

Funding

If you are taking a full-time pre-registration midwifery course in England, you will usually be eligible for a student loan to pay for tuition and maintenance fees. Arrangements are different outside of England.

Visit the NHS Student Bursaries website for more information: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk

Registration

All midwifery courses are approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). You must be registered with the NMC to work as a midwife.

Find out more in our Careers in nursing booklet and about training to be a nurse on the Health Careers website at: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/nursing
Next steps and progressing your career

If you want to work in health, it’s important to find out as much information as you can about the qualifications you need and the opportunities that are available.

Use the course finder on the Health Careers website to find out which universities offer approved midwifery courses (leading to registration with the NMC). Individual universities will be able to tell you what qualities and characteristics they look for in applicants, as well as the qualifications you’ll need to get in. For example, getting some work experience is an excellent way of showing your commitment and enthusiasm. You will need to apply for the course through UCAS.

If you are considering a change of career, volunteering or shadowing an established professional in your spare time is a useful way to find out more about the field of work that you wish to pursue, and can be invaluable in terms of making contacts.

Here is a checklist of things you should be doing, whether you’re still at school, studying for your degree or looking for a change in direction:

- Have you explored routes into your chosen career? You will need to gain a degree in midwifery but could gain invaluable experience from a healthcare assistant role, or undertake the 18 month degree programme if you are already a registered adult nurse.

- Are there any particular skills or experience that will improve your chances of getting into your chosen career?

- Have you enquired about opportunities to volunteer or do relevant work experience?

- Have you investigated further qualifications you might need for your chosen role?

- Have you searched the NHS Jobs website or spoken to your local trust to get an idea of the type of vacancies available?

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

To find a midwifery course, visit www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/courses

To search for jobs, go to www.jobs.nhs.uk

For job vacancies with other health organisations, visit www.gov.uk/jobsearch
Here are some other things you can be doing, depending on where you are right now:

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<th>What should you do now?</th>
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<td>- Visit <a href="http://www.stepintothennhs.nhs.uk">www.stepintothennhs.nhs.uk</a></td>
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<td>- Explore routes into your chosen career – will you need a degree or other qualification before you join, or will the NHS train you on the job?</td>
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<td>- Are there any particular skills or experience that will improve your chances of getting into your chosen career?</td>
<td>National Careers Service</td>
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<td>- Enquire about volunteering or work experience.</td>
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<td>- Find out if you need any specific A-levels, or equivalent qualifications.</td>
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| Studying for A-levels or another course at your school or a local college | **As GCSEs, plus:**  
  - If you need to study a particular higher education course, investigate which universities offer it.  
  - Find out if you need any further qualifications for your chosen role.  
  - Search the NHS Jobs website at [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk) and speak to your local trust to get an idea of current vacancies. | Subject teachers  
  - Your careers adviser  
  - UCAS  
  - Health Careers  
  - Professional bodies  
  - NHS Jobs  
  - National Careers Service |
| At university                            | **As A-levels, plus:**  
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  - Health Careers  
  - Professional bodies  
  - NHS Jobs |
| Looking for a new career                 | **As A-levels, plus:**  
  - Find out if you will need to retrain before you apply for new roles or if the NHS will train you while you are working. | Careers adviser  
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Fulfil your potential

The NHS is committed to offering development and learning opportunities for all full-time and part-time staff. If you work for the NHS, no matter where you start, you’ll have access to extra training and be given every chance to progress within the organisation. You’ll receive an annual personal review and development plan to support your career progression.

You will also be encouraged to extend your range of skills and knowledge and take on new responsibilities through the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF). The KSF is available on the NHS Employers website: www.nhsemployers.org/SimplifiedKSF

The example career routes on p.26-27 makes it easy to see at a glance how you can progress within your chosen career.

Other organisations that provide healthcare and work to prevent ill health will offer similar development opportunities and the chance to review your work. It’s a good idea to discuss career development with any employer you are considering.
Benefits of working in the NHS

As a midwife in the NHS, you will enjoy one of the most competitive and flexible benefits packages offered by any employer in the UK and a wealth of opportunities to develop your career. You will join one of the country’s most respected organisations and one which has the values of compassionate care and staff wellbeing at its very heart.

If you work as a midwife in the private or voluntary sectors or another public sector organisation, your pay and benefits will vary depending on your employer.

Your pay as an NHS midwife

Most jobs are covered by Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales, except doctors, dentists and very senior managers. The NHS job evaluation system determines a points score, which is used to match jobs to pay bands and determine levels of basic salary. Each pay band has a number of pay points. Staff will normally progress to the next pay point annually until they reach the top of the pay band.

Your career in midwifery could start at an AfC band 2 as a maternity support worker rising to midwife consultant at a band 8a-c. Examples of other midwifery roles and the typical AfC pay bands they attract include midwife entry level (band 5 rising to band 6) and midwife team manager (band 7).

For more information on pay bands and the most up-to-date salary information in your chosen career, visit www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/pay
One of the UK’s best pension schemes

The NHS Pension Scheme is one of the most generous in the UK. Every new employee automatically becomes a member, unless you choose to opt out.

Other employment benefits for NHS staff

Everyone employed under the NHS Agenda for Change pay system is entitled to:

- a standard working week of 37.5 hours
- holiday entitlements of 27 days per year, plus eight general and public holidays, rising to 33 days after ten years’ service
- pay enhancements to reward out-of-hours, shift and overtime working
- career and pay progression based on the application of knowledge and skills
- annual personal development review to support career aspirations
- occupational health services
- study leave for sponsored courses

Many of these benefits apply across the whole of the NHS, although local organisations may offer additional benefits such as cycle to work schemes and nurseries. Many local shops, restaurants and services offer discounts to health staff too, including most gyms and leisure centres. Health Service Discounts is an employee benefit provider for many NHS organisations and offers discounts and deals for NHS staff on shopping, holidays and financial services from well-known brands: [www.healthservicediscounts.com](http://www.healthservicediscounts.com)

Health and wellbeing at work and your work-life balance

The NHS is committed to helping staff to stay well, including serving healthier food, promoting physical activity, reducing stress, and providing health checks covering mental health and musculoskeletal problems.

The NHS will help you combine your work with commitments in your everyday life and at different stages of your career - whether you’re studying for a new qualification, raising a family or have other responsibilities.

The size and diversity of the NHS means we can offer you a range of flexible working and retirement opportunities. Part-time roles and job-share opportunities are often available, as well as term-time only, evening and weekend positions. Many people take an extended break to look after young children or other dependants who need special care, or to study full-time.

As well as advice and support for people looking after sick or elderly relatives, the NHS provides a range of childcare services for employees, including:

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

Get more information about the benefits and opportunities offered by the NHS at [www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/payandbenefits](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/payandbenefits)

You can find more information on health and well-being at work at [www.nhsemployers.org/healthyworkplaces](http://www.nhsemployers.org/healthyworkplaces)
### Example career routes

This diagram has been designed to provide examples of how staff can progress throughout their career in health. It gives an illustration of a range of health careers and how someone could progress through different levels. It is not exhaustive; details on other careers can be found in the relevant Health Careers booklets and on the Health Careers website.

The real-life story on page 12 describes how Karen Baker has progressed within midwifery. You can follow her career path in the white boxes on the diagram, alongside other potential paths in the different areas of health.