

Getting a job in the NHS: Healthcare support workers

NHS England and NHS Improvement



NHS careers

What do you think of when you think of a career in the NHS?

Doctor? Nurse? Pharmacist?

What about healthcare support worker?

Working as a healthcare support worker in the NHS can be incredibly rewarding.

You'll have the chance to learn new skills and make a difference to patients every day.



Take a look at the role...



Take a look at this short film for more information on the healthcare support worker role

Link: [Life as a healthcare support worker](#)

Where do they work?

Healthcare support workers can work in different places such as hospitals, people's own homes or GP surgeries.

Acute care
(e.g. hospitals)

Community services
(e.g. people's own homes)

Primary care
(e.g. GP practices)

Learning disabilities services

Mental health

Midwifery

Children and young people's services

What does the job involve?

Acute care

Acute care refers to short-term treatment, usually in a hospital. Healthcare support worker jobs in hospitals are very hands-on. As well as supporting patients' daily activities, like eating, drinking, and washing, you'll collect their blood samples and test swabs. Other tasks might include recording their fluids, taking their temperature, pulse, and blood pressure and keeping all their records up to date.

Community services

Working in community services sometimes means you'll be working in people's homes. These services support everyone from children and older people, to those living with frailty or chronic conditions. The job varies depending upon where you're based, but it's likely you'll get involved in developing care plans for patients, explaining treatments and educating people about health. You could also be involved in recording patients' progress and helping with hygiene and everyday activities.

What does the job involve?

Learning disabilities services

In this job, you'll be supporting people with a learning disability and/or autism in their daily activities, so they can be as independent as possible. This could involve helping to design care plans, and potentially delivering support within patients' own homes. As a healthcare support worker, you will help support people using these services and their families.

Primary care

Primary care is often the first point of contact for patients. Your GP, community pharmacy, dentist and optician are good examples, and you can expect a mix of administration and frontline work. You could run health assessments – blood pressure, urine and more – and assist in clinics alongside nurses and other colleagues. You'll also help keep services running smoothly, for example, managing stocks and updating records.

What does the job involve?

Children and young people's services

You'll undertake lots of different tasks in this job. As well as general patient care, you may be asked to help provide respite or palliative care in a child's home, support mothers in special care baby units, assist with clinics and handle administration tasks like stock taking.

Mental health

As a healthcare support worker in mental health settings, you'll work with patients, visitors, carers and their families, social services, and other voluntary organisations.

In practice, it's likely you'll help patients with their treatment and recovery. You could also get involved in helping to design care plans in team meetings and prepare risk assessments.

What does the job involve?

Midwifery

In this job, you'll fill out documents, manage stocks, prepare patients for clinical examinations and tests, and help them with any hydration and dietary needs.

Over time, you may also start recording blood pressure, temperature, and weight, take bloods from mums and their babies, and even lead antenatal classes.



What you need to know

Pay

Most entry-level healthcare support worker jobs are an NHS Band 2. The salary range is £18,546 to £19,918 (plus high cost area supplements where applicable).

Healthcare support workers may also receive unsocial hours payments and have the option to earn more by working extra hours through the staff bank.

Entry requirements and training

For most healthcare support worker jobs, you don't need to have worked in any healthcare jobs before. You will need good English and maths skills and you must have the right to work in the UK.

You'll be given training when you start the job. In most jobs, you'll work towards completing the Care Certificate. This is a set of standards and skills that people who are new to healthcare must learn to help them to look after patients well.

Working for us

We recruit people based on the values they have. Any skills you've learnt in school, volunteering or other jobs can help you in this job.

We want people who have the skills to do the job. These skills include:

Proactive

Enjoy meeting
different people

Caring and kind

Like every day
to be different

Able to follow
instructions

Friendly

Good at thinking
on your feet

What values are important to us



Working
together
for patients



Respect
and dignity



Commitment
to quality of
care



Compassion



Improving
lives

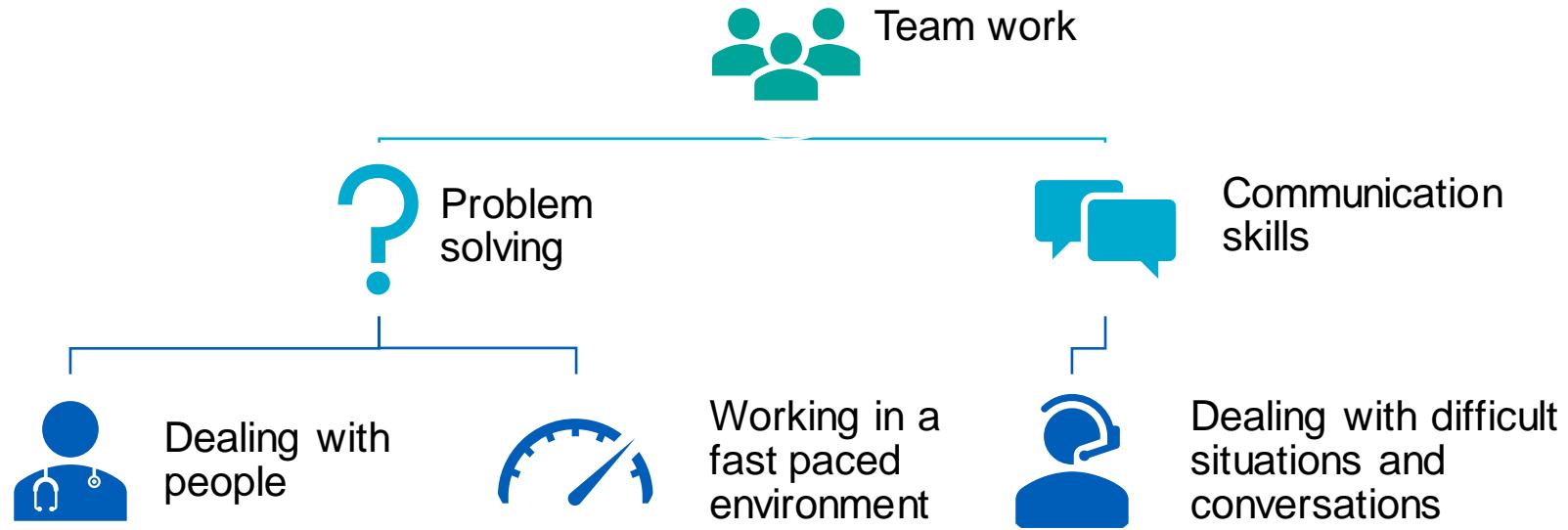


Everyone
counts

These values make up the NHS constitution. We want to make sure that the people who work for us have these important values. If you want to find out what work experience, volunteering, or other jobs will help you to demonstrate these values, you can take a quick test on the [Health Careers website](#).

What skills will you learn?

We will help you to learn skills which you can use in other jobs or in your every day life.



Take a look at the [Healthcare support worker learning and development roadmap](#) to learn about the many ways healthcare support workers can learn and develop.

What kind of things do healthcare support workers do?

There are lots of ways healthcare support worker can do good work for patients and learn new skills at the same time.

Lots of healthcare support workers go on to do other jobs in the NHS. We will support you to develop in your job, and we will support you to move into other jobs if you want to. This could include things like becoming a nursing associate or registered nurse or midwife.



Where can the job take you?

Nursing Associate Apprenticeship (2 years)

As an apprentice, you'll work for an NHS trust while training to become a nursing associate.

Direct entry nursing associate (2 years)

You apply directly to a university to study as a nursing associate.

Registered Nurse or Midwifery Degree Apprenticeship (4 years)

You study a university degree to become a registered nurse alongside working.

Undergraduate Registered Nurse or Midwifery Degree (3 years)

You apply directly for a university degree to become a registered nurse.

Shortened Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship (2 years)

If you decide to, you can top-up your nursing associate degree to become a registered nurse



Registered nurse or midwife

Why work for the NHS?

The NHS is an incredibly rewarding place to work. You have the opportunity to make a real difference to patients, their families, and our communities. There are many reasons to begin a career in the NHS. Some of these include:

- No two days are ever the same.
- A good wage and benefits.
- Working with lots of people who want to look after people as well.
- Good training to learn new skills and support to move into different jobs if you want to.

What do healthcare support workers say?

Chloe, healthcare assistant

“ After volunteering at my local hospital, I decided to apply for a job as a healthcare assistant. I was worried because I had no experience and I didn't go to university, but that didn't matter.

I think this is the most rewarding job you could ever have. I'm now planning to do a Level 3 Apprenticeship and I'd love to become a nurse or paramedic. I've realised how many opportunities there are working for the NHS.

”



What do healthcare support workers say?

Jerome, Senior healthcare support worker

“ For people thinking about starting in a healthcare support worker job, I'd say if you're willing to work to the best of your ability, learn new skills daily and feel proud of the work you carry out then come and join the best team in the world – the NHS!

This job is valuable both to patients and other members of the multidisciplinary team, and the most rewarding job I have ever had.



Find out more

- Learn more and find job vacancies on the [Health Careers website](#).
- You can also find job vacancies and information about working in different places and the NHS on [Indeed's website](#).

Other useful links

- [NHS apprenticeships](#)
- [Healthcare support worker learning and development roadmap](#)
- [Working in health](#)
- [Identifying transferable skills](#)
- [Planning your career](#)
- [Flexible working through the NHS staff bank](#)
- [Find your health career test](#)
- [Step into the NHS careers test](#)

