



Careers in medicine

Caring, compassionate, committed

Make a difference with a career in health

Welcome

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 or apprenticeship 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, as part of Leading Change, Adding Value.

The 6Cs 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/6Cs

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Your career in medicine

In this booklet you'll find out about the different medical careers available. 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, for example as a surgeon, to being based in the community as a GP. The training and support available to you in the NHS and the wider health sector can help you get to the very top of your chosen career.

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.

To find out more about working in medicine in the health sector, visit www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/medicine

Or if you have any questions, you can call our helpline on **0345 60 60 655** or email advice@healthcareers.nhs.uk

A career based on teamwork and opportunities

Doctors generally work as part of a larger healthcare team, alongside other professionals such as nurses, 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 that matches your skills and your interests.

Whatever branch of medicine you choose, you will have to take the patient's history, 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 judgement 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.

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. For example, 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. There are opportunities to take a career break during your training programme if you need one.

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

If you apply for a role either directly in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services, you may be asked to show how you think the values of the NHS Constitution apply in your everyday work. Find out more at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/nhsconstitution and www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/6Cs

There are lots of things to consider if you're thinking about a career as a doctor. Find out more at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/consideringmedicine

FAQs

What different types of doctor are there?

There are many different 'specialties', ranging from psychiatry, surgery, anaesthesia and pathology, through to radiology, general practice, obstetrics and gynaecology. See the At a glance section of this booklet for further information.

How do I train to be a doctor?

The training is in three stages: medical school/university, foundation training and then specialty training. Find out more at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/studyingmedicine

What qualifications do I need to become a doctor?

A range of qualifications may be acceptable for entry into medical school. However, each medical school sets its own requirements, so you must check before applying.

Find out more about studying to be a doctor at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/studyingmedicine and use our course finder to search for the medical schools/universities approved to run degree courses in medicine: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/courses

How long is the training to become a doctor?

It partly depends on the qualifications you have before going to medical school, and the type of doctor you want to be. For example as a guide, it'll take around ten years to train as a GP (including medical school) and 14 years to train as a surgeon.

To find out more about the different roles for doctors, visit www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles

Is there financial support available while I'm training to be a doctor?

You may be eligible to receive some financial support from the NHS during your degree in medicine. To find out more about the support available to medical students visit www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/financialsupportmedicalanddental

After medical school, you will usually be salaried during the foundation and specialty training stages.



Which role is right for you?

There are currently more than 60 different specialties in medicine 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, medicine in community settings, 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 part of a multidisciplinary team. Some require particular skills, such as an ability to make decisions in life-threatening situations or confidence with technology. Many require an interest in teaching and/or research.

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 to work with patients who have complex mental health problems and difficult life circumstances. As you progress through your training, you will discover what you are suited to.

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

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



Specialties at a glance

There are more than 60 specialties and sub-specialties and this section provides a brief overview of some of them.

For an up-to-date and comprehensive list of the different specialties, visit www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles

There are also short videos about some of the medical roles on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/NHSCareers



See **real-life stories** of people working in some of the roles at the end of this section.



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.

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 the 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.

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 specialties within 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.

Otorhinolaryngology (ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgery) has more separate surgical procedures than most other surgical disciplines put together. There are 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 and GPs 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 help to prevent illness, not just treat it.

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.

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 in the community. This specialty allows you to work using both medical and surgical techniques.

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 could treat women with gynaecological cancer or those having difficulty getting pregnant.



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 illness. Psychiatrists usually specialise in a particular branch of psychiatry. These include specialties that cater for different age groups, such as child and adolescent psychiatry, general (adult) psychiatry or old age psychiatry. Specialties within 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. The interpretation of any image presents a medical and intellectual challenge.

Radiologists work closely with other 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 range of minimal invasive procedures on patients, such as inserting stents.





Real-life stories



Foundation doctor in acute and respiratory medicine



Name

Tim Robbins

Job title

Foundation year 2 (FY2) doctor,
University Hospitals Coventry and
Warwickshire NHS Trust

Entry route

Work experience followed
by degree

**"Medicine involves science,
practical skills and the
opportunity to transform
people's lives."**

How I got into the role

I was inspired to consider medicine by a biology teacher at school. Work experience in hospitals, hospices and nursing homes confirmed my decision to study to become a doctor.

What I do

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.

The best bits

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.



Surgery

Name


Francesca Kum

Job title

Core surgical trainee,
Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Entry route

Medical degree and
foundation training



"The creative aspects
of surgery allow me to
see the outcomes of
my 'handiwork'."

How I got into the role

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.

What I do

Depending on the rota, a junior ENT doctor 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.

The best bits

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!



Emergency medicine

Name

Clare Bosanko

Job title

Consultant in Emergency Medicine,
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Entry route

Specialist training

**"I love the challenge
and variety of the work
and being part of a
high-performing team."**



How I got into the role

As a young child I'd always wanted to be a doctor – I can't remember ever wanting to do anything else!

During my university summer holidays I worked part-time as a lifeguard at a local swimming pool and enjoyed learning about life support and first aid. I really liked the idea of looking after injured or seriously unwell patients.

I worked in emergency medicine as a junior doctor and decided later on that I wanted this to be my chosen specialty

What I do

I work as a consultant in the emergency department at Derriford Hospital in Plymouth. I have a part-time contract and I normally work three days a week and one in six weekends. I'm usually on-call once a week, which can involve working at night. I supervise all the junior doctors and nurse practitioners and assist with decision-making for our unit.

The range of patients we see is very varied and includes people injured in road traffic and other accidents and the seriously ill, some of who may be in cardiac arrest. Patients from all age groups present to the emergency department including children, and communicating with parents is a vital part of my job.

One day a week I work a 12 hour shift with Devon Air Ambulance. The team comprises two paramedics, a doctor and a pilot and we attend accidents that include falls from rock climbing, horing and agricultural accidents and cardiac arrests in remote areas.

The best bits

I love the challenge and variety of the work and being part of a high-performing team. Knowing that you can always rely on your team of nurses and doctors is very reassuring and there's a great sense of camaraderie. It's incredibly rewarding to be able to use my skills to make people better



General practice

Name

Tanya Parry

Job title

GP registrar,
Bradford NHS Foundation Trust

Entry route

Registered general nurse
qualification, access to medicine
course and medicine degree

**"I enjoy getting to know my
patients and their families."**



How I got into the role

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.

What I do

My typical day starts at 7.45am and I complete my paperwork before the surgery opens at 8am. I see a number of patients until 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.

The best bits

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.



Paediatrics

Name

Kene Maduemem

Job title

Paediatric registrar, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust

Entry route

Specialist training in paediatrics



How I got into the role

In Nigeria, medical school students have to be present during the junior doctors' on-call shifts and I always enjoyed paediatrics. I knew I wanted to be a paediatrician before I left medical school even though I saw traumatic things.

I was president of the Federation of Medical and Dental Students of my medical school and organised a community outreach programme on strategies to combat mortality in under-fives. The programme won an award for being the most successful!

After medical school I got a paediatric training post in Nigeria for two years before migrating to Ireland. That was a great experience and I gained different postgraduate diplomas there, before finally getting a training post in England

What I do

My daily clinical activities depend on the rota. I can be rostered to cover the children's or neonatal ward or clinics. As the second on call, I hold the bleeps if I am covering the wards and respond to bleeps from the assessment unit, emergency department or labour ward/obstetric theatre, depending on the ward I am covering. I attend resus calls, difficult deliveries and category 1 caesarean sections.

During on-call hours, I will often be the most senior person on the ground but with good support from the consultants who readily jump in whenever they are needed. Attending clinics is mandatory and specialist clinics are supervised by consultants.

I like a cup of coffee during morning handovers and, when I'm working 9 to 5, I can dress smartly. But I'm in a pair of trainers if I'm working long days so I can run to different resuscitation bays.

The best bits

Paediatrics is not a speciality to delve into just because you love children. It goes beyond that and is very emotional and sometimes daunting. It entails dealing with the children, family, school and the community at large.

It is a great opportunity to be part of the care of children with chronic medical conditions, understanding and applying holistic care. I love the kids and I'm a 'get it done' kind of guy which the consultants seem to like.



Psychiatry

Name


Andrew Howe

Job title

Core Psychiatry Trainee, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

Entry route

Medical degree and foundation training



"I wanted a challenging career that would combine caring for people and science."

How I got into the role

I decided I wanted to be a doctor when I was about 15. I'd done lots of voluntary work with people with disabilities and wanted a challenging career that would combine caring for people and science.

My medicine degree included a clinical placement in psychiatry, half of which was spent in a general adult psychiatric ward and the remainder with a community mental health team. On the ward it was rewarding to see patients being able to return home. Within the community I enjoyed seeing how patients were supported to live their lives as independently as possible.

What I do

I'm in my second year of the three year core training programme in psychiatry. You need to pass three examinations to achieve Membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (MRCPsych) before completing core training.

Core training in psychiatry involves six placements lasting six months each. So far I have had a wide range of placements including community old age psychiatry, general psychiatry and child and adolescent psychiatry. Working with children also meant working with their families, schools and social workers.

I'm currently working on a female psychiatric intensive care ward, seeing patients with a range of serious mental health problems such as schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder.

Part of my training involves participation in a psychotherapy support group, which is led by a consultant medical psychotherapist. We discuss cases, and try to understand the emotional content of our patient interactions.

During core training I also see two patients for weekly individual psychotherapy

The best bits

Every patient is different and people present with psychiatric illnesses in different ways. No day is ever the same and I like the fact that you get to know your patients really well. Psychiatry is a very rewarding career, since you often see a complete change in your patients as they get better.



Getting started in medicine



UK 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 (two years)
- Specialty training (varies, depending on which route you take)

For further information about your career path as a doctor, see the diagram on p.30.

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 gives you opportunities to talk with people who are already doing the job.

The number and type of work placements or volunteering opportunities available will vary, depending on where you are in the country.

If you're planning to get experience to support your application for medical school, it's important to find out what the medical schools require or prefer. Experience doesn't

always need to be gained in the NHS or by volunteering alongside a doctor, so think about the independent sector, charities and other organisations where you could provide care or support for people.

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

Medical school

It is essential that you check the entry requirements for each medical school carefully before applying.

If you're considering a career as a doctor, you'll 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.

Excellent A-level grades or the equivalent qualifications at level 3 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 preliminary or 'gateway' 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 medical school, you will have what is generally referred to as a first MB degree.

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

Funding

Currently, 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.

For more information about student funding, visit the NHS Student Bursaries website at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students

Training after medical school

During your final year of medical school, you can apply for a place on a two-year Foundation Programme. After successful completion of this, you can then apply for a GP or specialty training programme or specialty which can lead you to becoming a GP or consultant.

Prior to your first year of Foundation (FY1) training, you'll need to do some shadowing. This will help you to become familiar with your new working environment. It should also include a handover of clinical responsibilities.

During foundation training, you'll work in a range of specialties in both hospital and community settings. Your abilities and competences will be assessed against national standards and you'll find out more about the career options before deciding on your chosen specialty.

FY1 will often consist of three different four-month placements – ideally, one medicine, one surgery and one other specialty. 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

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academic medicine, psychiatry or general practice, helping you make a decision about which specialty training programme you would like to pursue.

Doctors must be registered with the GMC to practise medicine in the UK. You'll receive a provisional registration from the GMC when you graduate from medical school, and full registration upon successfully completing FY1.

Training after the Foundation Programme

Following successful completion of your Foundation Programme, you will either choose a core training programme like internal medicine training, or 'run-through' specialty core psychiatry training or core surgical training. There are around 60 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.

Registration

The GMC licenses doctors to practise in the UK. The main purpose of registration is to ensure doctors' conduct, professional performance and health meets certain requirements, and to protect the public. The GMC maintains a register of doctors which is available to the public.

There are four types of registration:

- **provisional** – allows a newly-qualified doctor to complete the general clinical training needed for full registration
- **full** – allows doctors to work unsupervised in the NHS or private practice
- **specialist** – required to work as a consultant
- **GP** – required to work as GP

Rules governing registration are complex. For full details, visit the GMC website at www.gmc-uk.org

Speak to your careers adviser or contact Health Careers on **0345 60 60 655** or by emailing advice@healthcareers.nhs.uk to find out more.

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



Next steps and progressing your career

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 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.

For all medical degree courses, including the accelerated graduate entry programmes, you will need to apply through UCAS. 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.



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.

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

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 search for NHS 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:

Where are you now?	What should you do now?	Who can help?
Studying for your GCSEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Visit www.stepintothenhhs.nhs.uk > 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. 	Subject teachers Your careers adviser Professional bodies Health Careers National Careers Service
Studying for A-levels or another course at your school or a local college	As GCSEs, plus: <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. 	Subject teachers Your careers adviser UCAS Health Careers Professional bodies NHS Student Bursaries National Careers Service
At university	As A-levels, plus: <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. 	University careers service Health Careers Professional bodies
Looking for a new career	As A-levels, plus: <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, for example an Access to Medicine course qualification or alternative. 	National Careers Service Health Careers Professional bodies UCAS NHS Student Bursaries



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. The medical education and training framework on p.30 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.

Revalidation

All licensed doctors are required to demonstrate, on a regular basis, that they are up to date, fit to practise in their chosen field and able to provide a good level of care.

They do this through a process known as revalidation, which can provide patients with confidence that their doctor is being regularly checked by their employer and the GMC.

Licensed doctors have to revalidate usually every five years which involves having an annual appraisal based on the GMC's core guidance for doctors.





Benefits of working in the NHS

If you work in the NHS, you'll enjoy a competitive and flexible benefits package 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 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 doctor

Doctors in training

As a doctor in training, 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 paid per hour, with enhancements paid for working during unsocial hours. In addition, an allowance is paid if you have to be available on call and you may be eligible for other pay allowances.

Doctors in training 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.

Consultants

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.

General practitioners (GPs)

Some 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 that determines GPs' pay. Some GPs are salaried employees of a practice.

Career grade doctors

There is a range of roles available for doctors working within a hospital. Specialty 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.

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

Benefits for doctors in the NHS

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

While working as a doctor in training, you'll also receive regular support from your Health Education England local office to assess your clinical competencies and provide careers advice to support your progress.

Many other 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

Get more information about the benefits and opportunities offered by the NHS at

[www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/
payandbenefits](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/payandbenefits)

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.

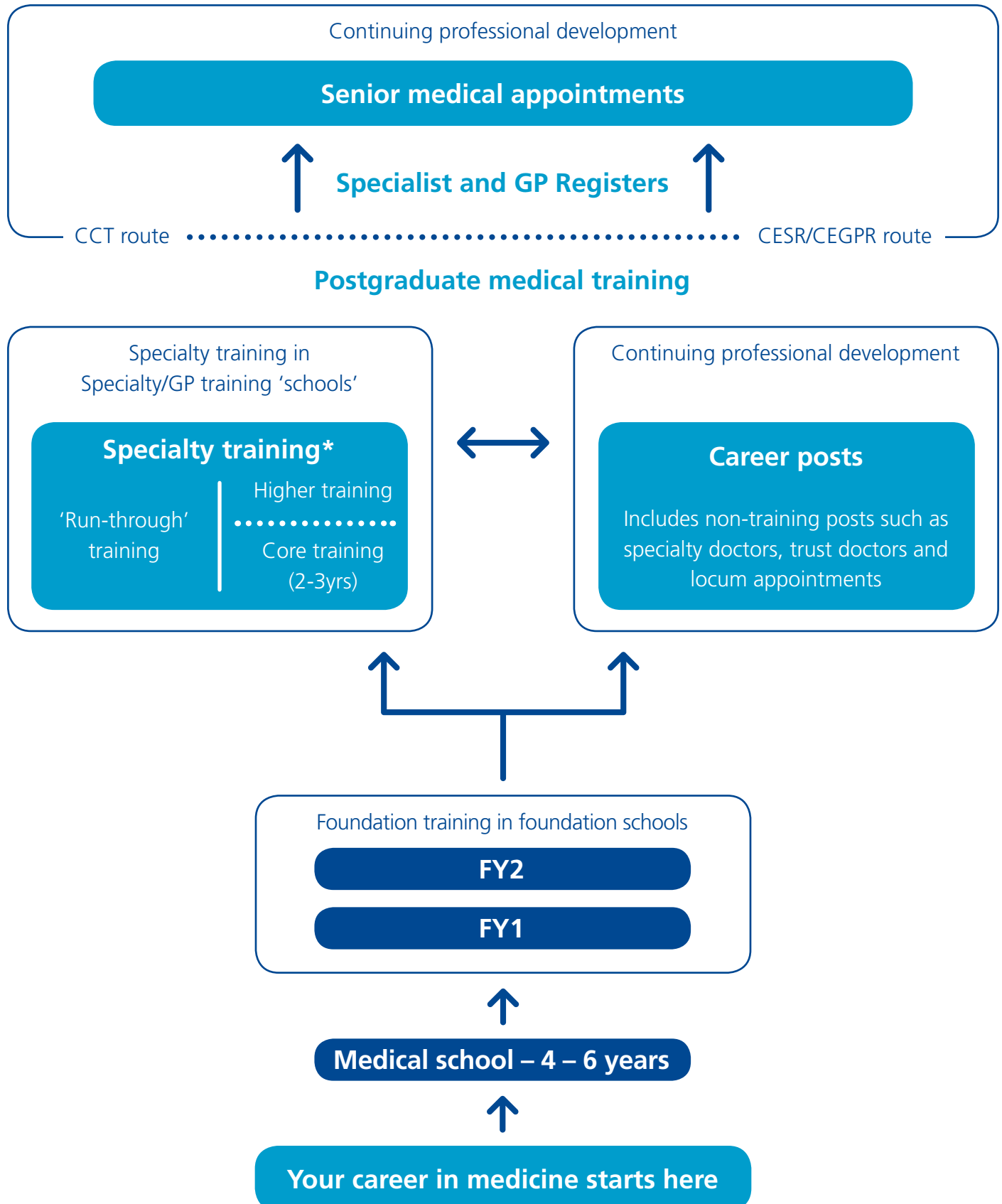
The size and diversity of the NHS means we can offer you a range of flexible working and retirement opportunities. Part-time roles and job-share opportunities are often available. Many people take an extended break to look after young children or other dependants who need special care, or to study full-time.

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

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

UK medical education and training framework





Arrows indicate competitive entry →

***Specialty training** programmes may be either 'run-through' or 2–3 years **core training** followed by competitive selection into **higher training** according to specialty

CCT	Certificate of Completion of Training
CESR	Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration
CEGPR	Certificate of Eligibility for General Practice Registration

**For further copies of this
booklet please contact:**

Tel: 0345 60 60 655

Email: advice@healthcareers.nhs.uk

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk

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