



On behalf of the Mid and South Essex
Sustainability Transformation
Partnership (STP) incorporating:

Basildon and Brentwood CCG
Castle Point and Rochford CCG
Mid Essex CCG
Southend CCG
Thurrock CCG



GPs and Physician Associates in Primary Care

Mid and South Essex
Sustainability and Transformation Partnership



How do I find out more?

Call **01268 464 616** or email primarycare.workforce@nhs.net

Introduction

Mid and South Essex Training Hub has created this booklet to provide information on clinical careers in primary care (surgeries and community teams). You can discover the many roles available and explore career opportunities.

The Mid and South Essex Training Hub is here to help with your entry into a career with the NHS. We are comprised of local people, representatives from all across the NHS (including GPs and other primary care staff), universities, colleges and other educational providers to offer advice and assistance to students and young people in Mid and South Essex with an interest in health care.



The joy of general practice is its infinite variety. You simply never know what you will be dealing with next. It could be a simple sore throat, a heart attack, a chest infection, a schizophrenic breakdown, a pregnancy or a convulsing child. Being a brain surgeon may be seen by some as a more glamorous career, but no other branch of medicine has the remarkable variety of general practice."

- Royal College of General Practitioners

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General Practitioner

General Practitioners (GPs) are often the first point of contact for anyone with a physical or mental health problem. Looking after the whole person - physical, emotional, social, spiritual - is a vital part of any GP's role. GPs see patients of all ages from new-born babies to elderly people. Being able to offer continuity of care is one of the most important and enjoyable aspects of the job.

GPs work as part of large multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) which support the holistic care of any patient. These can include nurses, midwives, health visitors, pharmacists, physician associates, psychiatrists and care of the elderly specialists. They meet regularly to discuss cases and plan joint approaches to co-ordinate care for people.



General Practitioner Roles


Most GPs spend a significant amount of time seeing patients in individual consultations, wherever they are based. The working week is divided up into sessions, each lasting half a day. Seeing patients for individual consultations is only one aspect of the work. The rest of the week is spent on administration, meetings, training, teaching and special interests, depending on the workload of the individual GP.

GPs may also be attracted by the pay and conditions. They can reach a relatively high income early in their career and it is one of the specialties most suited to part-time and flexible working. Common procedures/interventions include:

- Performing clinical examinations of patients to assess, diagnose and monitor a patient's conditions
- Interpreting findings from investigations such as blood tests to help reach a diagnosis
- Supporting patients to look after themselves

Entry Requirements

Prior to starting your training you need to have completed a university medical degree (generally a five-year programme, but this varies between universities), followed by a two-year foundation programme. There is a further three years of GP specialty training. It is also possible for doctors in training or already qualified in another specialty to apply for GP specialty training. It is useful to test out your interest in general practice by talking to doctors already working in the speciality and by getting relevant work experience during the foundation programme.

 Annual income: £55,000 +

Physician Associate

Physician Associates support doctors in the diagnosis and management of patients and undertake post-graduate training. They work under the supervision of a doctor, training to perform a number of day-to-day tasks.

Physician Associates have to meet a nationally approved standard of training and practice. As well as academic achievement, you'll need to be able to demonstrate experience of working with the public, an interest in health or social care, the right values to work for the NHS and excellent communication skills.

This does not lead to becoming a GP, but can lead to further specialisation, management, research or teaching careers.



Entry Requirements

You'll usually need a bioscience-related first degree to get onto one of the training programmes available, although an undergraduate course is currently under development. Alternatively, if you're a registered healthcare professional such as a nurse, allied health professional or midwife you can also apply to become a physician associate.

Physician Associate training usually lasts two years, with students studying for 46-48 weeks each year. Although it involves many aspects of an undergraduate or postgraduate medical degree, the training focuses principally on general adult medicine, rather than speciality care.

Physician Associate Roles

- Taking medical histories
- Performing examinations
- Diagnosing illnesses
- Analysing test results
- Developing management plans



Annual income: £31,000 - £41,000

Additional Information

For more information on careers in the NHS, please visit the following websites:



Step into the NHS

Information on Careers in the NHS

www.stepintothens.nhs.uk



General Medical Council

Independent body governing doctors

www.gmc-uk.org



Nursing and Midwifery Council

Regulatory body for nursing within the UK

www.nmc.org.uk



Royal College of Nursing

Membership organisation promoting nursing

www.rcn.org.uk



NHS Health Careers

Further information about healthcare careers including Social Care and Mental Health

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Do I have to go to university to get a job in the health sector?

A. No. For example, around 50% of the NHS workforce has a university or other professional qualification, but there are lots of opportunities for staff without these qualifications, especially in the wider healthcare team.

Q. Does the NHS provide financial support to students going through university courses?

A. Traditionally, the NHS has provided financial support for eligible students on approved pre-registration programmes in a number of career areas. However, this changed from August 2017. The type of support varies, depending on the career and the course. The main routes are either as a Full-time University Student, receiving a Student Finance England loan; Or via the new apprenticeships that are starting to be offered. This route means that you do not need to pay tuition fees.

Q. How much can I earn in the NHS?

A. It depends on the type and level of job you are working in. Doctors, dentists and senior managers have their own pay systems, whereas all other NHS staff are paid under the Agenda for Change pay system.

Q. I'm trying to get work experience in the NHS, but don't know where to start. Can you help?

A. If you are still at school or college, your local NHS organisations may offer the opportunity to gain work experience. There are also many volunteering organisations out there, including Volunteering England, Do It!, Community Service Volunteers and others.

If you would like more information and/or have further questions, please email us at: primarycare.workforce@nhs.net

Notes