

# UK HEALTH.



## What is it?

The health sector is one of the largest sectors in Scotland, employing an estimated 227,000 people. The sector includes hospitals, doctors' surgeries, dental practices, ambulance service, nursing homes, complementary medicine and a huge range of other activities, from sight tests in opticians to research in medical laboratories.

About 180,000 people work in the NHS, but there are opportunities in independent healthcare and in charities and voluntary organisations.

## Where do I start?

Some jobs require few or no qualifications. A positive attitude and a real interest in working in health are of real importance. You can build on and develop skills and qualifications when in work:

- You might want to volunteer to gain experience and to see if it's for you.
- There are apprenticeships such as pharmacy, health, dental nursing, estates, catering and administration.
- You might want to go to university to study to become, for example, a nurse or an occupational therapist, a radiographer or a clinical scientist.

## What are the jobs?

Take a look at the Ambulance service, dental services, healthcare science, health informatics, management, nursing and midwifery, medicine and the allied health professions, such as radiography. You can also be part of the wider healthcare team for jobs such as catering, plumbing and electrical, accounting, administration, or cleaning.

## What skills & strengths do I need?

A variety of skills are needed including:

- Team working;
- Communication in words and in writing;
- People skills;
- Being keen to carry on learning;
- Caring skills are important for the caring roles;
- An eye for detail would be important in the laboratories;
- Practical skills for dentistry or engineering;
- Number skills;
- An ability to solve problems;
- Innovation;
- Physical fitness if you have to lift or if you are on your feet all day!

## Did you know?

- There are more than 300 different job opportunities!
- Many parts of the health sector work 24-hours-a-day 365-days-a-year.
- You might work on a shift system or nights, but it's flexible – some people work 9 - 5!
- There are NHS student bursaries for eligible students on pre-registration nurse training courses.
- There is one health employee for every 23 residents in Scotland!

## How I did it.

**Christopher Farrell**  
Estates Apprentice with the NHS

Christopher started work with an NHS organisation as an apprentice plumber. He left school with some Highers and was amazed to find that he could do the job of a plumber in the health sector.

He completed an apprenticeship, winning the title of Apprentice of the Year in 2010. On his job and his future, he says: "I was at college when I heard about the apprenticeship scheme on offer in NHS. My first thought was 'Why would the NHS need apprentices?' You never hear about the people who work in estates when you are at school. But now that I'm in the NHS, I can see how important the work is. I hope to be able to make my career in the NHS."

## Useful links.

**Skills for Health:**

[www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

**Student Award Agency for Scotland:**

[www.saas.gov.uk](http://www.saas.gov.uk)

**NHS Scotland recruitment:**

[www.jobs.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.scot.nhs.uk)

**NHS Careers Scotland:**

<http://nhsrecruitment.scotland.gov.uk>

**Alliance Scotland Careers IAG fact sheets:**

[www.alliancescotland.org/publications/IAGfactsheets/](http://www.alliancescotland.org/publications/IAGfactsheets/)

**Skills Development Scotland:**

[www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)