Careers in health informatics

Join the team and make a difference
Welcome to the NHS

The NHS offers a huge range of exciting and challenging opportunities for people who are passionate about making a difference.

With more than 300 different careers on offer, there is a job for you no matter what your interests, skills or qualifications.

What’s more you’ll be given every opportunity to build on your skills and learn new ones as part of the Career Framework – our commitment to skills development. See pages 12 and 13 for more information about this.

Scientists, accountants, porters, psychologists, nurses, health informatics staff and estate managers, to name but a few, are all needed to ensure the smooth running of the NHS. These people, and many more, work together as a team to deliver the very best care for our patients.

To find out more about becoming a member of the NHS team, call 0345 60 60 655, email advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk or visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk

We look forward to hearing from you!
Foreword

Welcome to Careers in health informatics.

In this booklet, you’ll find out about the wide range of opportunities within health informatics in the NHS.

One of the key ways to provide better healthcare is through the intelligent collection, management, use and sharing of information – otherwise known as health informatics. If you love working with Information Technology, enjoy library work, are good at analysing data or find satisfaction in keeping accurate records, then there could be a job for you.

All members of the NHS team, including healthcare professionals, managers and administrators, rely on fast, accurate information to deliver the best care they can. Using IT creatively to achieve this means health informatics is one of the bedrocks of the NHS.

Whatever your academic background, you can find a role that’s right for you. What’s more we offer a flexible workplace, excellent benefits and a wealth of opportunities to develop your career.

The NHS Careers team

To find out more about working in health informatics please visit
www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hi

Or if you have any questions, you can call our helpline on 0345 60 60 655 or email advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk
The NHS – a rewarding place to work

There are very few careers as rewarding as one in the NHS, or that give you the opportunity to work with such a wide variety of different people.

We actively recruit people of all ages, backgrounds and levels of experience. This helps us understand the different needs of the patients we serve every day and provide the best possible service.

Whichever area you join, you become part of a talented, passionate team of people, committed to providing the best care and treatment to patients. You will also enjoy one of the most competitive and flexible benefits packages offered by any employer in the UK.

Benefits of working in the NHS

Everyone employed by the NHS is guaranteed a salary that matches their ability and responsibilities, and given every opportunity to increase it through training and development.

On top of your basic salary, you will receive at least 27 days’ holiday each year, plus a range of other benefits, including occupational health and counselling services.

Join one of the UK’s best pension schemes

The NHS Pension Scheme is still one of the most generous and comprehensive in the UK. Every new employee automatically becomes a member and you will get an excellent package of pension benefits, fully protected against inflation and guaranteed by the Government.

For more information about the pension, and a full list of the benefits included, please visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/payandbenefits

PAY AND CONDITIONS

The NHS pay system, known as Agenda for Change, offers real benefits for all directly employed staff except doctors, dentists and very senior managers, including:

• 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
• better career and pay progression based on the application of knowledge and skills
• annual personal development review to support career aspirations.

Other benefits of working in the NHS include training, occupational health services, automatic membership of the NHS Pension Scheme (unless you choose to opt out) and study leave for sponsored courses.

To find out more about the different Agenda for Change bands, and see the most up-to-date starting salaries for each one, go to www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/payrates
FULFIL YOUR POTENTIAL

- The NHS is committed to offering development and learning opportunities for all full-time and part-time staff.

- No matter where you start within the NHS, you’ll have access to extra training and be given every chance to progress within the organisation.

- You will receive an annual personal review and development plan, to support your career progression.

- As part of the Knowledge and Skills Framework, within Agenda for Change, you will be encouraged to extend your range of skills and knowledge and take on new responsibilities.

See pages 12 and 13 for more on the Career Framework, and an example of how an employee has progressed through the NHS.
CASE STUDY

Name: Jan Harrison

Job title: application support and training manager, North Yorkshire and Humber Commissioning Support Unit

Entry route: joined from the food industry

The skills I gained as a scientist and manager in the food industry really helped me in my NHS career. My first NHS role was as a sterile services technician on an evening shift, which worked for me around my children.

I’d always enjoyed quality assurance and auditing so when I saw a post in clinical audit at the trust, it really appealed to me. Securing this job meant I worked across a lot of specialities, working with a range of different healthcare professionals, helping them with their clinical audit and governance. This role really helped me to appreciate what the NHS does.

Developing training packages had been something I had previously enjoyed, so my next career move was into IT training. Straightaway I was hooked.

My employer was also really supportive in my development and helped me complete my Post Graduate Certificate in Education. Since then, my career in IT training has really taken off. I have been really lucky to work at a number of different organisations and positions and I am now managing a team of 15 people offering IT training across the Humber area.

Helping people get to grips with technology is really satisfying, especially real technophobes who then become IT enthusiasts. It is also inspiring to know you have helped others to do their job more effectively which then improves patient care. It is easy to forget when you are not working directly with patients, but it is ultimately why we are all here.
Helping you find the right work-life balance

The NHS is committed to maintaining a healthy work-life balance for all NHS staff. There is a real focus on specific areas that are designed to make your life easier at certain times during your career. These include:

• flexible working and flexible retirement
• childcare provision and support for carers in the workplace
• training and development
• coping with stress
• tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Managing your commitments in and out of work

The size and diversity of the NHS means we can offer you a range of flexible working opportunities.

Part-time roles and job-share opportunities are often available, as well as term time only, evening and weekend positions. We will do everything we can to help you combine your work for us with commitments in your everyday life – whether you’re studying for a new qualification, raising a family or juggling other responsibilities.

Many people take an extended break to look after young children or other dependants who need special care, or to study full time.

We will help you combine your work for us with commitments in your everyday life.

As well as advice and support for people looking after sick or elderly relatives, we may be able to provide a range of childcare services for NHS 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

You can find out more about the benefits of working in the NHS at
www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/payandbenefits
Your career in health informatics

The intelligent use of information and technology to provide better healthcare – that’s health informatics, one of the fastest-growing areas of the NHS.

Every day in the NHS, information has to be collected, managed, used and shared. Good patient care depends on this fast and accurate flow of information.

As a health informatics professional, you are a vital part of the NHS team, the expert on patient information and the latest technology that others rely on to do their jobs.

Whether the job is to provide technical support or to deliver cutting-edge ICT projects, health informatics staff are responsible for the non-stop cycle of information flowing throughout the NHS.

Health informatics staff help clinicians keep up with the latest evidence and research. They work with researchers or run their own research projects to advance clinical knowledge. They help find new ways of delivering vital services, such as laboratory test results, X-rays and drug dispensing, while also making them faster and more foolproof. They develop systems to free up clinicians from routine paperwork, allowing them to spend more time treating patients.

They work on systems analysis and development while maintaining intranets within hospital or community organisations. They also develop technologies that help patients live independently and longer with a better quality of life.

They run the systems that allow NHS staff to communicate with each other, to access information and to deal with all the day-to-day service needs, such as ordering vital supplies and booking patient appointments. They also train and educate staff on the latest technological developments. In fact, there is very little happening in the NHS today that does not involve health informatics.

The main areas of health informatics

There are many opportunities in health informatics, whatever your interests, skills and education. The work falls into these main areas:

- information and communication technology (ICT)
- information management
- libraries and knowledge management
- clinical informatics
- project and programme management
- education and training
- health records and patient administration.

More information can also be found at www.hicf.org.uk

Information and communication technology (ICT) staff

Most people rely on computers and electronic communication to do their job. If you work in ICT you have a key role, helping to run the systems used by (among others) scientists, doctors, therapists and other healthcare professionals, secretaries and managers.

ICT staff are hands-on; diagnosing and fixing faults, supporting staff who use the systems, and developing improvements. Your work will support computers and communication systems ranging from appointment booking systems to systems in intensive care units.

Who will it appeal to?

Those with a natural flair for computing. Examples include helpdesk support staff, business analysts and information managers who develop better systems for staff and patient services.
Name: Kevin Whittaker

Job title: curriculum development manager, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust

Entry route: degree in biology and qualified teacher

I trained as a primary school teacher but soon realised it wasn’t for me. I spotted a job as an IT trainer with the local hospital trust which both suited my skills and love of technology. Getting the job was the start of my health informatics career and I haven’t looked back.

As an IT trainer, I had to develop interactive e-learning materials and skills assessments. This meant getting some great experience that led to my next role as an e-learning facilitator. In this role, I developed systems and applications for use across the NHS in the North-West.

One of the products I developed was for teaching basic IT skills to healthcare professionals. These were soon recognised nationally as best practice and led to my current role as curriculum development manager.

I now lead a small team who develop learning materials for over 300 training centres delivering the IT Skills Pathway (www.itskills.nhs.uk) across the UK. As well as working nationally on the pathway, I also get involved in developing other website applications for the trust that support performance, HR and patient safety. With responsibility for so many different projects, it means having to manage my workload to make sure we deliver high quality products.

I enjoy leading the team but also like to be hands-on in the development. It means I can stay at the cutting edge of an evolving technological landscape. This allows me to be innovative and develop systems and applications that meet the requirements of staff and support the delivery of patient care.

It means I can stay at the cutting edge of an evolving technological landscape.
Information management staff
Staff in information management gather, analyse, interpret and present information about health and healthcare to improve services and patient care. Such information supports NHS services in all sorts of ways, from finding out how a trust is performing to planning how many staff are needed to deliver care in an NHS organisation. An example is information that shows how quickly an ambulance trust responds to emergency calls and can be used to improve performance.

Who will it appeal to?
People who can interpret statistical data and turn it into meaningful information about services. This branch of health informatics includes performance management teams, which analyse information about patients and services in order to find ways of improving service delivery. It also includes staff working in data protection and confidentiality, who focus on ensuring information is handled legally and securely. Information management staff need a thorough understanding of health services and the way information is used throughout the NHS.

Libraries and knowledge management staff
Healthcare professionals and managers need information to keep abreast of changes, in the treatment of a particular disease for example, as well as for their professional development. It’s your role to ensure they have ready access to the information they need, whether it’s on paper, on disk or online. Increasingly your job will also be to help patients and their families find reliable information and sources of help on the Internet.

Who will it appeal to?
A passion for information and for helping people access it lies at the heart of jobs in libraries and knowledge management. You will be the sort of person who can use a library system or an internet search engine to track down information. You need excellent people skills and a helpful attitude because dealing face to face with people at all levels of the NHS is a key part of the job.
Clinical informatics staff
How can we use clinical information to improve patient care? That’s one of the important questions you will help answer. If you work in clinical informatics, your job is to capture, communicate and use clinical information to benefit healthcare services. This could be something as simple as analysing information about falls on wards to prevent hospital patients having accidents, or a large-scale, ambitious project such as helping to develop electronic patient records that link NHS organisations, from GPs to hospital clinics.

The work involves using and developing electronic means to support the whole cycle of information about patients and treatment, including research and audit. Clinical informatics staff are usually healthcare professionals who develop a strong interest in using IT and information to find better ways of working.

Who will it appeal to?
Those who want to find ways of making services better through the imaginative use of information. A clinical background means you have a thorough understanding of the operational side of services, while you are likely to be interested in harnessing the power of IT and data to make those services work better. Within that there is a wide range of opportunities, such as clinical audit, as well as openings to develop your own problem-solving projects or research.

Project and programme management
Project and programme management in health informatics is crucial to the successful delivery of national and local health informatics programmes. Any role is likely to involve the development and implementation of new systems or applications, such as on-line patient records or operational systems that link hospital services with those in the community. It’s main responsibility is to ensure that projects produce the required deliverables within the quality, time and cost constraints.

Who will it appeal to?
Anyone interested in starting and seeing through a successful health informatics project or task will thrive in this environment. Enjoying producing plans and documentation while communicating and managing a variety of stakeholders is also important. Project management skills/qualifications and experience of working in informatics are also very attractive to employers. Knowledge or experience of IT in the NHS is desirable, not essential.
Education and training

Health informatics staff in education and training help NHS staff in using the latest technology so that the benefits technology offers are realised and patient care improved. Working in either training and IT departments or clinical settings, they train healthcare professionals in computer literacy, systems and applications, and the use of IT and software. This would include the latest developments in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illnesses and diseases.

Who will it appeal to?
People who have an interest in developing the skills of others and a strong knowledge of the latest ICT. They will need to be comfortable in delivering training to individuals and/or groups. Many roles in this branch of health informatics will need previous experience or qualifications in education or training. It is highly likely that experience of clinical IT systems will be needed, especially for more senior roles.

Health records and patient administration

Health records and patient administrators collate, store and retrieve records used in diagnosis and treatment. This is a critical role in the NHS due to the vast number of healthcare professionals involved in patient care who need access to this vital information at short notice. They also promote and support the effective use of data, information, knowledge and technology within the NHS to support and improve health and the delivery of patient care.

Who will it appeal to?
Those with an acute attention to detail and a commitment to patient confidentiality. Staff in health records and patient administration also need to interpret data and ensure it is easily accessible to a variety of staff and healthcare professionals. Knowledge of the NHS and its health records systems is often essential for anyone working in this field.

For more information about working in health informatics please visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hi
CASE STUDY

**Name:** Samantha Hodge

**Job title:** Information quality clerical officer, The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals Trust

**Entry route:** Health informatics apprenticeship

Whilst completing her A Levels, Samantha decided that university wasn’t for her and was encouraged by her parents to look into an apprenticeship. She decided to apply for the pilot health informatics course.

I decided to go down the apprenticeship route as they allow you to earn, learn and gain practical experience in the workplace. I found the Business Administration Course on the Internet, which I applied for. I was contacted by Skills for Health who informed me of the pilot health informatics course, and asked if I was interested in applying. I had never heard of the term “health Informatics” however I was intrigued by the prospect of working for the NHS, in a non-clinical role.

My apprenticeship placement was in the Information Quality department at The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital. As a cadet, I am near the bottom of the career framework, which is an incentive for me, as I know there is room to progress further in my career. As a result of my health informatics apprenticeship, I recently gained full-time employment.

As an information quality clerical officer, my daily duties include monitoring patient information on the Trust administrative systems, and amending any errors in a timely manner to ensure patient care is not compromised. I also handle telephone calls, read and respond to emails, open and redirect mail and file both manual and electronic records.

I was both honoured and thrilled to have won the Cheshire and Merseyside Cadet of the Year. When I started, I was a relatively shy and quiet individual, and am amazed at how far I have come in a relatively short space of time. Working and learning in a supportive and encouraging environment has really boosted my confidence and I feel that my colleagues have really helped me to challenge myself and do things out of my comfort zone, such as giving a speech as part of a National Apprenticeship Week event and even doing a live radio interview!
Careers in health informatics

Career Framework

The Career Framework has been designed to improve career development and job satisfaction for NHS employees.

It encourages individuals to learn new skills and take on extra responsibilities that enable them to progress within the organisation. Many people take on additional responsibility within their own area, while others retrain and move in to different roles.

The case study on Kevin Whittaker describes how he has progressed within health informatics.

You can follow his career path in the white boxes on the diagram below, alongside other potential paths in the different areas of the NHS.
The diagram below gives an illustration of a variety of NHS careers and where they may fit on the Career Framework. It is not exhaustive; details on other careers can be found in the relevant booklets and on the NHS Careers website. To explore other career pathways in health informatics, visit the Health Informatics Career Framework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health informatics</th>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Midwifery</th>
<th>Nursing</th>
<th>Wider heal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director of information management and technology</td>
<td>Director of human resources</td>
<td>Director of maternity services</td>
<td>Director of nursing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of information systems</td>
<td>Associate director of children's services</td>
<td>Consultant midwife</td>
<td>Nurse consultant in stroke</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum development manager: managing a small team of people delivering national training systems and applications</td>
<td>Head of accounts</td>
<td>Head of midwifery</td>
<td>District nurse (team manager)</td>
<td>Head of estates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-learning facilitator: developing e-learning products for training delivery</td>
<td>Project manager</td>
<td>Community midwife</td>
<td>Community psychiatric nurse</td>
<td>Chaplain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT trainer: training staff in using IT systems</td>
<td>Payroll manager</td>
<td>Midwife</td>
<td>Neonatal nurse</td>
<td>Catering manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical coder</td>
<td>General office manager</td>
<td>Community care assistant</td>
<td>Medical secretary</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Helpdesk adviser</td>
<td>Maternity support worker</td>
<td>Senior healthcare assistant</td>
<td>Security officer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support desk assistant</td>
<td>Healthcare assistant (maternity)</td>
<td>Healthcare assistant (nursing)</td>
<td>Maintenance assistant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health records assistant</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nurse cadet</td>
<td>Porter</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Visit the NHS Careers website at www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hi
View the Health Informatics Career Framework, a web-based resource, at www.hicf.org.uk
What opportunities are available?

Health informatics offers a range of opportunities and challenges. Which area is right for you?

Would you enjoy the challenge of supporting, improving and developing computer systems? Is data analysis your strength, or are you attracted by the idea of helping healthcare professionals keep up with the latest knowledge and research?

This section gives you a brief overview of the roles in each of the areas of health informatics. You can find more detailed information on the NHS Careers website.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

ICT staff are responsible for the development, management and support of the ICT infrastructure in one or more NHS organisations.

The roles listed below give an idea of the variety on offer.

For more information about roles in ICT visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/ict](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/ict)
To search for jobs visit [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>Main responsibilities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICT support technician</td>
<td>• helps set up computing equipment, for example in a hospital&lt;br&gt;• installs new computers, carries out initial tests, loads programmes and helps maintain computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT test analyst</td>
<td>• supports the technical development and smooth running of new computer systems, for example development of an electronic patient record system&lt;br&gt;• analyses a problem within a computer system, diagnoses and solves it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network manager</td>
<td>• manages a trust’s IT network infrastructure and provides technical support and advice to all the client organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service desk operator</td>
<td>• investigates and helps staff with their computer problems&lt;br&gt;• resolves faults over the telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems developer</td>
<td>• works on the challenging programme of development in the NHS, for example linking GPs with hospitals by computer, allowing patients to book hospital appointments from the GP’s surgery&lt;br&gt;• works closely with other healthcare professionals to make sure technical solutions are geared to improving ways of working and patient care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunication manager</td>
<td>• manages the telephony system&lt;br&gt;• the job could involve using the latest technology to design a new hospital telephony system and ensure its smooth operation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information management
Information management staff use information, including statistics, to plan health services, monitor how they are performing and develop them to improve patient care.

The roles listed below give an idea of the variety on offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>Main responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Clinical coder                     | • makes a full and accurate computer record of patients’ stays in hospital  
• translates patients’ diagnoses and treatment into alphanumeric codes  
• liaises with doctors, nurses and other staff to ensure patients’ diagnoses and treatment are recorded accurately  
• reviews quality of data                                                             |
| Clinical coding tutor               | • designs and delivers training for clinical and non-clinical staff to support the use of clinical coding  
• problem solving, and sharing ideas and best practice to make sure the information recorded about patient diagnoses and treatment is full and accurate |
| Data quality manager                | • reviews current information systems to ensure that quality of data meets national standards and regulations  
• establishes and maintains new data audit programmes to ensure information is high quality                                                    |
| Information analyst                 | • analyses information on health services, for example a population’s health needs or hospital waiting times, and uses it to help managers and healthcare professionals plan services and improve performance |
| Information auditor                 | • helps healthcare professionals analyse the way they work, and uses the information to find ways of improving patient care                                 |
| Information governance manager      | • ensures information systems comply with national rules about how information is captured, shared and stored                                       |
| Planning and performance manager    | • analyses information to monitor current services and plans for the future  
• helps ensure key performance targets are met, for example on waiting lists             |
Libraries and knowledge management

The amount of information on healthcare is increasing rapidly as we see huge advances in medicine and new thinking on managing and delivering services. Librarians and knowledge management staff help healthcare professionals and managers access information in books, periodicals and online so they can keep up with the latest research and evidence base to maintain their professional training and development.

The roles listed below give an idea of the variety on offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>Main responsibilities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head of archives and museums</strong></td>
<td>• responsible for art and historical collections of unique interest in the field of health within certain NHS trusts. These include collections of artifacts and documents that highlight the history of medicine, medical breakthroughs, or the men and women who pioneered healthcare in the past</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Information assistant**            | • helps and supports the librarian  
• staffs the enquiry desk  
• carries out routine administration, such as sending out letters and ordering books, journals and other materials, as well as maintaining databases and records |
| **Knowledge and information manager**| • takes a lead on making sure a hospital or trust’s information resources are set up and run in the best way  
• manages the introduction of new information resources, for example helping staff and managers redesign information services around the needs of patients |
| **Librarian**                        | • answers research enquiries from library users  
• provides information using a variety of resources – from clinical textbooks to computer databases and the internet  
• prepares packages of information for healthcare professionals and other staff who may use it for training, research or their own professional development |

For more information about roles in libraries and knowledge management visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/km](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/km)

To search for jobs, visit [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)
Clinical informatics

Clinical informatics staff are usually healthcare scientists, doctors, nurses or other healthcare professionals who have moved to health informatics. Their job is to capture, communicate and use patient information to improve services and patient care. The role also involves developing electronic tools to manage clinical information.

The roles listed below give an idea of the variety on offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>Main responsibilities</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Clinical informatics specialist manager | • carries out full or part-time audit or research, using understanding of clinical practice to find ways of improving services  
• manages information services for a specialist area, for example maternity  
• assists the development of specific IT and/or information projects, such as the electronic patient record, which shares patient information across hospitals and GPs |
| PACS administrator (picture archiving communication system) | • supports the running of the service that stores radiological images, such as X-rays, ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans, and transfers them electronically to specialists within a trust and around the country |
| Pathology links manager            | • responsible for the IT systems and applications linking shared pathology services  
• ensures the system works reliably and is compliant with national information governance regulations |

For more information about roles in clinical informatics visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/ci
To search for jobs visit www.jobs.nhs.uk
Project and programme management
Health informatics projects aim to deliver robust and accessible systems that support the delivery of patient care. The project and programme team in health informatics implement these projects from start to successful completion.

The roles listed below give an idea of the variety on offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>Main responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business analyst</td>
<td>• interviewing key stakeholders and documentation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• analysing structures, systems processes and policies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• facilitating improvements to IT systems as a result of their analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme and project</td>
<td>• setting up and maintaining project documentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>support officer</td>
<td>• producing regular and ad hoc project reports</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• monitoring project risks and achievement of milestones</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior project manager</td>
<td>• planning the project and managing the team</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• identifying and managing risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ensuring the project stays on track and delivers on time</td>
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</table>

For more information about roles in project and programme management visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/p3m](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/p3m)

To search for jobs, visit [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)
Education and training
The NHS is committed to giving its staff the skills they need to deliver care. Educators and trainers in health informatics are responsible for making sure our staff are able to use the latest technology.

The roles listed below give an idea of the variety on offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>Main responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>• developing and adapting training materials and resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• planning and preparing for training interventions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• delivering, supporting and assessing training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training administrator</td>
<td>• publicising available training courses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• providing advice on all aspects of booking correspondence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• responsible for maintaining the training resources, training database and website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training manager</td>
<td>• managing provision of training across an organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• planning, delivering and evaluating a range of training and development programmes to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meet strategic and operational needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• providing advice to the organisation on improving the quality of training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information about roles in education and training visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/EandT](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/EandT)

To search for jobs visit, [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)
Health records and administration
Access to health records is crucial to the delivery of patient care. Healthcare professionals need them to understand a patient’s medical history and deliver care appropriately. Staff working in this area of health informatics are responsible for the health records system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>Main responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health records assistant</td>
<td>• locating, retrieving, tracking and delivering patients’ health records and case notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• maintaining confidential patient records and case notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• participate in audits of patient records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health records manager</td>
<td>• communicating and negotiating contentious issues with senior management and clinical staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• improving the quality of the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• providing advice and guidance to a range of people on all aspects of legislation relating to health records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical summariser</td>
<td>• extracting information from patients’ notes and entering them on to a computer programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• displaying any significant medical problems prominently so it is obvious to any healthcare professional using the record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting list co-ordinator</td>
<td>• monitoring waiting lists and ensuring their accuracy and completeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• implementing and maintaining a system to monitor waiting times and identify changes in demand and any potential problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• providing weekly statistical information and reports on performance alerting others where there are specific problems that need to be managed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information about roles in health records and administration visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/healthrecords](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/healthrecords)

To search for jobs, visit [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)
**CASE STUDY**

**Name:** Katherine Cheema

**Job title:** specialist analyst, Quality Observatory (hosted by Central Southern Commissioning Support Unit)

**Entry route:** BSc Psychology and Physiology

My job is very varied. It can be quite strategic one minute and detailed the next – collecting and analysing data to see how individual services are performing, and helping to work out how they can be improved.

My degree had a significant research and statistical component, and during my study I had part-time and holiday jobs involving IT, databases and knowledge management. I knew that when I finished at university I wanted to use my skills to make a difference.

I initially joined the team as a performance analyst but have changed roles to become a specialist analyst with a broad portfolio of responsibilities. I am actively involved in developing new information projects with clinical and management teams that help improve the user experience in terms of interpretation and presentation of information.

In this job, you need an eye for detail, as well as the ability to see the wider picture – it’s easy to get bogged down in numbers! It’s also important to be able to explain your analysis to a wide audience – the best kind of analyst is able to defend their conclusions, as well as make them, especially when they might not be what people expect.

I’m lucky enough to be part of a forward thinking, dynamic team that is nationally respected, and have recently completed a postgraduate diploma in research methods with a view to providing specialist support to help develop new patient services.

This might not be ‘frontline’ work but it can make a difference to a patient’s experience.
Getting started

Anyone can enjoy a career in health informatics. There are roles for everyone, no matter what qualifications or previous work experience you have. Wherever you start, you will have the chance to learn on the job and carry on studying if you choose.

Health informatics (HI) staff work in every area of healthcare on a huge variety of projects and tasks. This means that the scope for people with different interests, skills and qualifications is enormous. People come into HI from many different backgrounds. They include librarians, academics, scientists, business specialists, statisticians, managers, IT specialists and also clinicians such as doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. They come from within healthcare, like the clinicians who move over into a full-time HI role, or they come from outside, bringing their specialist expertise to the NHS.

The entry requirements will vary depending on the job. It may be possible to enter a career in HI with no formal qualifications, although GCSEs or equivalent qualifications and/or some work experience may be an advantage. Entry level certificates and vocational qualifications at levels 1 and 2 offer an alternative means of acquiring essential skills, providing a mix of classroom learning, creative thinking and hands-on experience.

At entry level, you can apply for a range of assistant jobs, working in libraries, outpatient departments, or IT helpdesks, supporting healthcare and health informatics professionals. Jobs at this level include assistant library or information officers and IT helpdesk advisers.

You will also be given access to IT training and assessment through the IT Skills Pathway. It allows everyone working with IT to identify their training requirements and learn new skills.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in health informatics combine on-the-job training and work experience while in paid employment, with formal off-the-job training. Apprenticeships are open to anyone over 16 and not in full-time education. Availability varies around the country, so it’s best to speak to your local NHS organisation for more information about opportunities in your area.

With A levels, equivalent qualifications and/or some work experience, you can start your career as a HI trainee or through a higher apprenticeship. There are also opportunities for existing staff to enter junior HI positions. A levels may also be helpful for some specialist roles, for example A levels including the study of anatomy and/or physiology are helpful for specialist library posts such as clinical librarian.

Health informatics qualifications

Currently there are a few specific qualifications developed and certificated directly by the NHS for health informatics. For clinical coders, there is the National Clinical Coding Qualification, which is available through the Institute of Health Records and Information Management who are the awarding and administrative body. An increasing number of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in health informatics are available. These can be gained as part of a degree or masters qualification, or you can study for them within the job role. Many universities now have part-time masters courses and offer diplomas in health informatics, as well as undergraduate courses in health informatics management.

Foundation degrees, designed primarily for existing healthcare employees, combine academic study with workplace learning, equipping you with the relevant knowledge, understanding and skills for your chosen career path. A number of foundation degrees are available in healthcare informatics.
Many staff taking up HI roles in the NHS will already have many of the core skills needed for the job and, once employed, will be supported in identifying any gaps and receive help towards bridging them.

For more information on the values of the NHS Constitution, visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/values

For more information on training in the NHS, go to www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hitraining

To find jobs and apprenticeships in health informatics, visit www.jobs.nhs.uk

For more information on the career pathways in health informatics, visit www.hicf.org.uk

Graduate opportunities
The NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme has an option to specialise in informatics management. A strong academic background and sound management experience in health opens up opportunities in senior management positions in health informatics.

Staff working in information management often hold a degree or masters degree in health informatics.

A degree in library and information studies or information science will allow you to join the professional tier of the library service. For a very senior role, such as knowledge services manager, you may also need a postgraduate qualification in information and library work.

A particularly specialist role, such as a head of archives and museums, might require specific qualifications or experience, such as a postgraduate qualification in museum or heritage studies.

Work placements
Arranging a work placement is one of the best ways to find out if a career in health informatics is for you. This will give you the opportunity to experience the working environment, the type of jobs you will be doing and to speak to people already working in that area of the NHS.

The number and type of work placements available vary depending on where you are in the country. For more information about opportunities in your area, please talk to your local NHS organisations.

Pay
Most jobs are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay scales. This pay system covers all staff except doctors, dentists and the most 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.

Your career in health informatics could start at an AfC band 1 as a helpdesk adviser, rising to band 7 for an information management and technology section manager. More senior managerial posts attract higher bandings or are covered by the salary scheme for very senior managers in the NHS. Examples of other roles in this group, with typical AfC pay bands, include clinical coding support worker (band 2), service desk operator (band 3), information officer (bands 4–5), systems developer (band 5) and health records manager (band 7).

For more information on pay bands in your chosen career, visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/payandbenefits

For information on the graduate training scheme for the NHS, visit www.nhsgraduates.co.uk
CASE STUDY

Name: Simeon Smith

Job title: higher business analyst, Health and Social Care Information Centre

Entry route: NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme

Health informatics was an obvious career choice for me as I wanted to work for the NHS and also had experience of analytics and statistics. After graduating, I applied for the NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme. I was really pleased to get a place as it is highly competitive.

I spent two years on the scheme experiencing health informatics in different settings. My first year was spent in information analysis at Leeds and York Partnerships NHS Foundation Trust. It involved developing and delivering intelligence for senior colleagues and doctors that showed local trends in mental healthcare and identified areas for service improvement.

Between NHS placements, I got to experience the private sector at a company offering services to the NHS. It offered the chance to work in a commercial setting as a market analyst and research how the company’s products were perceived by the health service.

For the final year, I joined the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) as a business analyst. I worked on a project establishing a new service collecting and disseminating post-operative patient survey information nationally. I really enjoyed being involved in the creation and improvement of systems and services and knew that business analysis was the career for me.

After completing the scheme, I took a full-time post at HSCIC as a Higher Business Analyst gaining more responsibility and autonomy. HSCIC values professional development, so I’m always learning new skills and am now studying towards a business analysis diploma.

Informatics is critical to forging a sustainable NHS. In my current role, I am able to design services and build tools that provide the health sector with intelligence to drive efficiency and improve outcomes. I get great satisfaction from seeing something I helped create be so important to patient care.

I get great satisfaction from seeing something I helped create be so important to patient care.
What’s your next step?

We hope you’ve found this booklet useful, and now have a better idea of whether a career in health informatics is right for you.

If you’ve decided you do want to work in this area, it’s important to start planning ahead straight away. Find out as much information as you can about the qualifications you need and the opportunities that are available.

If you need a degree, UCAS can advise on which universities offer which courses. They will also be able to tell you what they look for in applicants. For example, getting some work experience is an excellent way of showing your commitment and enthusiasm.

Here are some things you can be doing, depending on where you are right now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where are you now?</th>
<th>What should you do now?</th>
<th>Who can help?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studying for your GCSEs</td>
<td>• check what your likely exam grades/results will be</td>
<td>Subject teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<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>
<td>Your careers adviser/Connexions service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• are there any particular skills or experience that will improve your chances of getting into your chosen career?</td>
<td>Professional bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enquire about volunteering or work experience</td>
<td>NHS Careers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• find out if you need any specific A levels, or equivalent qualifications</td>
<td>National Careers Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• consider the option of an apprenticeship.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying for A levels or another course at your school or a local college</td>
<td>As GCSEs, plus: • if you need to study a particular degree, investigate which universities offer it</td>
<td>Subject teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• investigate any further qualifications you might need for your chosen role</td>
<td>Your careers adviser/Connexions service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• search the NHS Jobs website at <a href="http://www.jobs.nhs.uk">www.jobs.nhs.uk</a> and speak to your local trust to get an idea of current vacancies</td>
<td>Professional bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• consider the option of an apprenticeship.</td>
<td>NHS Jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National Careers Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At university</td>
<td>As A levels, plus: • visit the Graduate Management Training Scheme website at <a href="http://www">www</a>. nhsgraduates.co.uk</td>
<td>University careers service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for a new career</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Careers/Connexions service (you may have to pay to use these services)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whatever position you’re in now, the NHS Careers service can help. Call us on 0345 60 60 665, email advice@nhscareers.nhs.uk or visit our website at www.nhscareers.nhs.uk
To search for jobs, go to www.jobs.nhs.uk
To find information about professional bodies and all other contacts, please see www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/hicontacts