

“
Here I am supported
Here I am SW London”

Real South West London

Real Jobs

Real You

NHS Opportunities for you





“

Here I am successful

Here I am SW London ”

Time to shine...

Whatever your background.

Whatever challenges you face in your life.

Whatever qualifications you have (or don't have).

There is a job and a place for you within NHS South West London.

It's why we have created this toolkit, a 'one stop shop' for people in our community to find work within South West London (SW London) health and social care.



“
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Here I am SW London”

#timetoshine



“
**Here I am happy
Here I am SW London**”

For you, for everyone

With this toolkit, you can access all the information you need about working in South West London (SW London) – from identifying your skills and understanding interview processes to exploring the benefits we offer and even turning your first NHS job into a lifelong career.

Most important? We want the toolkit to help anyone who feels under-represented or even isolated within the SW London community. We can give you the confidence and assurance you need to get into jobs in the NHS, offering you support every step of the way.



Your work, your way

Just as importantly, this toolkit offers different routes into NHS work, no matter your education, qualifications or existing training.

From apprenticeships and work experience through to paid internships and adult education, get help deciding which path is the best fit for you and your life.

In this together

By bringing you into the NHS, it will benefit not only you – but all of South West London.

Our community is already a place that offers an incredible diversity of people, spaces and places – but we want to go even further, making it inclusive for every single SW London resident.

We look forward to you joining us.
Your SW London ICS team.

How to

Use This Toolkit

You can move through each page in order.
However, if you prefer, you can use the tabs at
the bottom to go to the section you feel is most
relevant to you.

The following page is a
rundown of each section
to help you decide.



Why Work in the NHS

Learn why working in the NHS is a hugely rewarding experience that offers genuine job satisfaction and great personal development opportunities.

Who You Are

Explore how we support people from different backgrounds who can feel they are under-represented within work places and society.

Roles Open to You

Discover the roles available to you from entry level clinical/non-clinical jobs and healthcare support work to health professional roles.

Your Pathways into Work

Learn about the six pathways into work including internships, taster days and adult education.

Your Toolkit

Get help into work wherever you are in your life. Perhaps you're ready to start applying or maybe you'd like extra support – whatever you need, this section's got you covered.

Our Partners, Your Allies

Learn about the organisations working alongside SW London ICS to support you into NHS work plus meet the SW London residents who've already successfully made the move.

All Your Support at a Glance

Browse through the support services and links we recommend in this toolkit for quick and easy reference.



Why →
work in
the NHS



“
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Why work in the NHS

You may be looking for your first
ever job.

Or you need something steady and
secure after taking a break.

Or you're just ready for a change in
direction and a fresh start.

Whoever you are, the NHS is the
right place for you.

#timetoshine

The real deal

Unlike so many other industries, we offer good jobs and proper contracts with real opportunities to grow. Better still, we also give you a decent work-life balance, fair pay, great pensions, generous sick pay and holidays, plus many other benefits.

“

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Wendy Majewska
Primary Care Training Hub Lead
South West London Mental Health
and WellBeing Hub



[Click here for
full Case Study](#)

Open to all

Even better is that you don't need to have first aid training, never mind a medical degree. With 350 different types of jobs in the NHS, there really is a role that's ideal for you – from gardener to receptionist, data entry to communications, finance and people management to health-care support worker – and everything in between. Most importantly? We'll give you the training and support you need to flourish.

What NHS work is *really* like

We're not going to sugar coat it – life in the NHS can be tough at times. We all know the system isn't perfect and there are issues that need to be sorted by people 'higher up'. But – and it's a big but – NHS work is satisfying and rewarding. And if you decide to stick around, there's huge potential for professional and personal development just waiting for you.

And an NHS job helps give you a real sense of belonging, of being part of a genuine team. Most importantly – directly or indirectly – you'll be helping South West London's community day in, day out, making lives better or supporting people when they are at their most vulnerable. For many of our NHS colleagues, that's priceless.

It's what makes the NHS so different, so special.
So become part of it – **and let's see just how far you can go.**

who →
you are



Who you are

We know that everyone is different, that we all face our own challenges.

We're more than a statistic or a tick in a box because each of us is unique. It's why this toolkit focuses on the different stages of life you may be at, instead of focusing solely on identities or characteristics. Maybe you're looking for your first job, need support getting back into work or want help with your lifestyle. Whatever stage you're at, we're here to support you.

Helping hand

That said, we appreciate that some individuals face more challenges than others. Where relevant, it's why this toolkit occasionally offers targeted guidance, support and resources for the following groups.

Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic

Create a support network via dedicated groups and services for every step of your NHS journey.

Deaf and disabled people

Learn about the support services available to help you get into and stay in NHS work.

Lone parents/people with caring responsibilities

Discover how to make the NHS fit round your personal life with our comprehensive flexible working plans.

Older people

Uncover the NHS jobs where your experience and skills can make an invaluable contribution.

People with mental health issues

Get into NHS work with the level of support and guidance you need to ensure you thrive in your job.

School leavers

Learn how to take your first step into the world of work with a job that comes with great opportunities.

Young people (particularly care leavers)

Get your life on track so you can start living and working the way you want and need to.

“

I feel like I do have a very good team.”

Yasmin
Project Support Officer

Roles →
open to
you



“
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Roles Open to You

NHS SW London offers four different role types to help get you into work as well as a apprenticeships.

Which role type is right for you depends on who you are, what skills and experience you have, and where you are in your life.

To help explain, here's a breakdown of each role type:

Entry level clinical

Working directly with patients and helping to look after them. This is a great opportunity if you want to get back to work after a period of time when you've been doing other things, or perhaps you want to start building a new career. We don't expect you to have lots of qualifications or experience – we'll give you all the training you need to succeed.

Role Fast Facts

No. of Roles Available: 30+

Example Roles: Health Care Support Worker, Dietetic assistant, Maternity support worker, Occupational therapy support worker, Orthotic technician, Podiatry assistant, Physiotherapy assistant and Prosthetic technician.

Salary range: Band 2 starts at £22,383

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Lorraine Podiephatshwa
NHS Social Prescribing Link Worker



Click here for
full Case Study



Entry level non-clinical

These roles are ideal for beginning on your NHS journey. Non-clinical positions mean you're not directly diagnosing or treating patients but supporting the clinical staff and their department, hospital, clinic or GP surgery. From receptionists and medical secretaries to porters and drivers, there are a huge number of roles you may already be qualified for – or require minimal training to get you job-ready.

Role Fast Facts

No. of Roles Available: 50+

Example Roles: Band 2 - Domestic Support Worker, Housekeeping Assistant, Driver, Nursery Assistant, Domestic Team Leader, Security Officer, Secretary/Typist and Healthcare Assistant. These roles are Estates and Facilities roles.

Band 3 - Emergency Care Assistant, Trainee Clinical Coder, Estates Officer and Occupational Therapy Support Worker

Salary range: Band 2 starts at £22,383 and Band 3 starts at £22,816 (Reference - [Agenda for change | Health Careers](#))

“

I love working here. In terms of job security, the NHS is the best. ”

Allied health professional (AHP)

From prosthetists to physiotherapists, AHPs treat and rehabilitate patients, improving their lives immeasurably. Depending on your specialisation, you will typically focus on helping your patients either recover lost mobility, develop communication skills, overcome worries about every day living, and much more.

Role Fast Facts

No. of Roles Available: 15

Example Roles: Physiotherapist, Prosthetist, Therapeutic Radiographer, Drama Therapists, Osteopaths, Paramedics, Physiotherapists, Prosthetists, Dietitians, Occupational Therapists

Salary range: AHP typically starts at Band 5

Healthcare support worker

Whether working in mental health or children's services, this role sees you helping a healthcare professional treat their patients. Importantly, a support worker job offers a genuine launchpad for progressing your career – either by specialising in your area or training to become a fully qualified healthcare professional yourself.

Role Fast Facts

No. of Roles Available: 30+

Example Roles: Dietetic Assistant, Healthcare Assistant, Occupational Therapy Support Worker, Orthotic Technician, Podiatry Assistant, Physiotherapy Assistant/Support Worker, Prosthetic Technician, Radiography Assistants, Imaging Support Worker

Salary range: HCSW typically starts at Band 2

“
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Luqman Dawud
Senior Clinical Pharmacist



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full Case Study



“
Realising that there's not always
necessarily the one right thing to do.”

Apprenticeship

Get paid while you're being trained – it's that simple. Ideal for starting an NHS career, you get work experience while receiving a wage. There are different level apprenticeships available from Level 2 (equivalent to GCSEs) up to Level 7 (equivalent to a bachelor's/master's degree). Best of all, once qualified, it is common to remain with your current NHS SW London employer or, if you wish, continue training at a higher level or potentially go on to university.

Role Fast Facts

No. of Roles Available: Hundreds

Example Roles: : Allied Health Professional, Ambulance Service, Dental, Estates/Facilities, Healthcare Support, Midwifery, Nursing, Peer Support, Pharmacy, Physician Associate, Public Health, Wider Healthcare

Salary range: Variable (depending on experience)

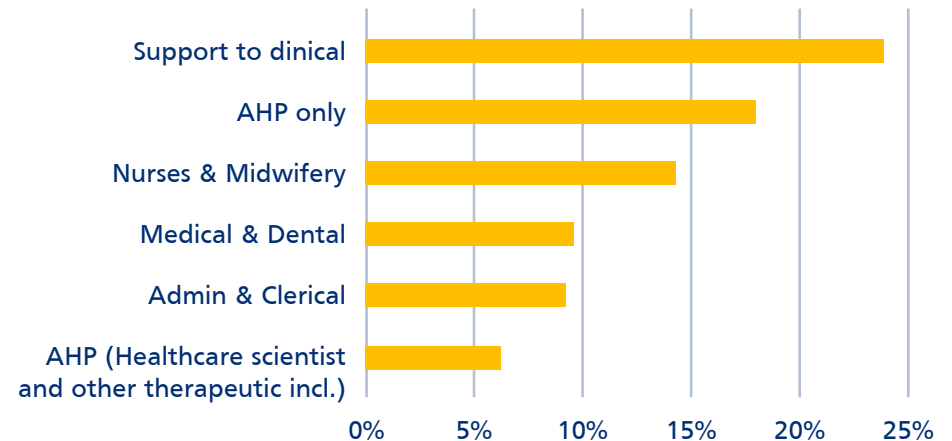
“
The NHS has been fantastic for
me to help me get on in life.”

Melanie Ashdown
Lead of Integrated Care Support
Services and Aim Solutions

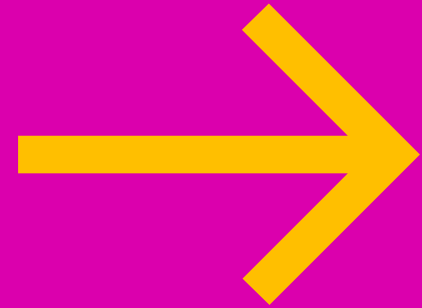
Opportunities for all

We employ about 35,000 people in NHS SW London. The good news is there are still many work opportunities available. The chart featured here shows our vacancy rates in some key areas:

SW London Vacancy Rates



Your



pathways

into work

Your Pathways into Work

We offer different pathways to get into work in SWL NHS – or to grow your career if you're already working with us

“
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Here I am SW London”

“
Here I am happy
Here I am SW London”

Andrew Nwosu
Chief Allied Health
Professions Officer



[Click here for full Case Study](#)



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Why work
in the NHS

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Roles open
to you

Section 5
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into work

Section 6
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Apprenticeships

- These can be undertaken by anyone over the age of 16
- Pays more than the minimum wage.
- Your apprenticeship combines practical training with study
- Your training can focus on clinical or non-clinical work
- Apprenticeships are available to both new and existing NHS workers

Supported internships

- These are work placements that last up to a year
- Available if you are aged 16-24 with either autism, disabilities or learning difficulties
- Support provided by a dedicated job coach who gives advice and guidance
- Designed to give you the skills you need to work in the NHS

Adult education

- Specific university/college courses available to get qualified
- A minimum of a £5,000 training grant for select courses
- Range of programmes for graduates wanting to work in the NHS
- Apprenticeships, traineeships and cadet schemes also available

Work in NHS SWL

Existing staff training

- Access a wide range of free online training resources
- Funded training towards qualifications such as a degree or masters
- Leadership training is available and delivered by the NHS Leadership Academy.

One-day shadow/taster days or careers events

- 'Shadow' a healthcare professional to see how our services work day-to-day
- Available to anyone over 16
- Practical employability support and advice to help you with NHS Careers

Paid work placements/experience

- Gain hands-on experience of specific roles to jump-start your career
- Coaching and mentoring from managers while you learn
- Designed to help build your confidence to get into work.

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Your →
Toolkit

Welcome to the main event your NHS SWL toolkit

The toolkit is divided into different sections to reflect where you may be in your life at the moment. Select the title that applies to you the most and begin exploring the opportunities, support and advice available to get you into work:

Get into work

You already know you want a job in the NHS – but you don't know how and where to get started. Here's everything you need to know.

Get work
now



Get support

You are worried your background and/or protected characteristics might work against you. Get the advice and support you need to overcome any obstacles in your way.

Get support
now



Get costs under control

You are worried about the cost of living and how to manage your finances. Discover how working in the NHS can help you take control of your money and make it go further.

Get in control
now



Get confident

You feel nervous about your prospects as you feel you don't have the skills or aptitude. Don't worry – this section is designed to help you start building your confidence.

Get confident
now



Get life skills

You may be struggling to live a structured day-to-day life, never mind hold down a job. Head here to find out how to get back on track before getting into NHS work.

Get skills
now



Get a career

You already have aspirations about working in healthcare in the long term. Learn how to turn any NHS job into a rewarding career.

Get a career
now



Get into Work

You've already decided you want to work in the NHS – but how do you get started?

With many vacancies and 350 job types available within NHS SW London, it can be confusing, even overwhelming to know how to kick off your job hunt. To help you, we've pulled together the following resources that take you through the entire process – from how to uncover your own related skills and research suitable jobs to how to prep for (and ace) any interview.

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Here I am SW London”**

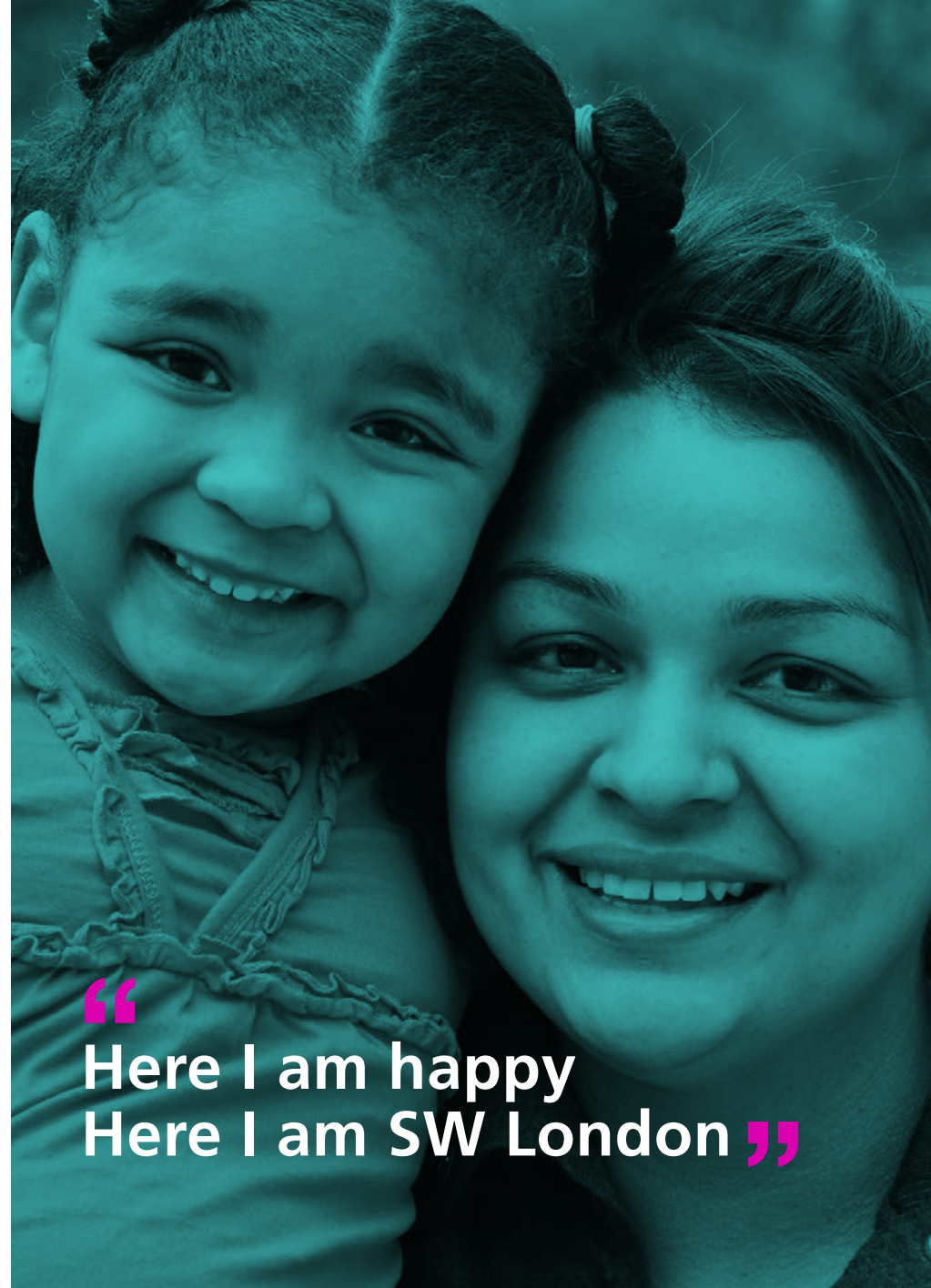
Peter Warburton
Designate Nurse for
Safeguarding Adults



**Click here for
full Case Study**



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How to identify the right job for your skills & strengths

Learn about NHS jobs

With 350 jobs available, we wouldn't blame you for feeling daunted by all the choice.

To help you understand what each job means, NHS Jobs has put together an easy-to-read online guide that details many of the key jobs and careers available. From health play staff and HR managers to paramedics and phlebotomists, discover what each job type means and what aptitudes and qualifications (if any) you will need. Then use each job's related set of links to learn more about that individual role.

Take the Job Quiz

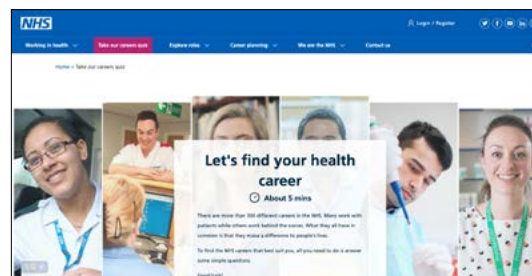
A common misconception about the NHS is that you need the right qualifications and training before you can even apply for a job.

The truth? You probably already have the skills and life experiences you need to get started. It's why this five-minute quiz was created. It features 50 quick-fire multiple choice questions that help you identify what skills and experiences you currently have – plus what your preferences are. Once completed, the quiz reveals the NHS jobs ideally suited to you with jumping off points to learn more.

Click to discover
NHS jobs



Click to take
the quiz



Qualified?

Remember, it doesn't matter whether you have a degree, HND, GCSEs – or no qualifications – there's still an NHS SWL opportunity waiting for you.

How to use NHS resources to find a job

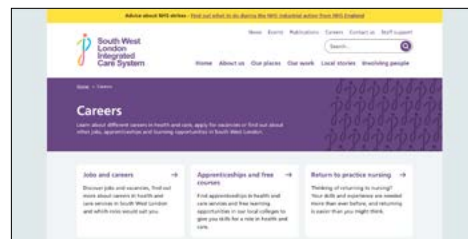
Get a local NHS job

With a clear idea of the job you want, it's time to go local and research the NHS opportunities available in South West London.

We've made this easy for you by creating the NHS SW London Integrated Care System Jobs and Careers page. Learn about the different types of careers we offer, find info about current vacancies plus access advice and support to help with job applications. We've also included details on work experience placements as well as info on apprenticeships.

Best of all, you can search for a job near where you live. For instance, select from NHS SWL's healthcare organisations including Croydon, Hounslow and Richmond, Kingston, St George's, Epsom and St Helier, and more. Now browse through the organisation's listings to find a job that's right for you, your skill sets and your experience.

Click to explore SWL jobs

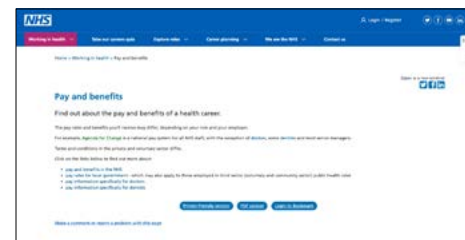


Find out about salaries and benefits

An NHS job can be tough work – but you won't go unrewarded.

Depending on your role and healthcare organisation, salaries and benefits can vary. But the bottom line? In a full time job, you can expect to have at least a 37.5 hour working week with a minimum of 27 days annual leave – plus bank holidays – and paid sick leave. You also get an annual personal development review plus planning to help with your career aspirations (with full access to training courses). Finally – and perhaps most importantly – you are automatically signed up to one of the most generous pension schemes around.

Learn more about pay and benefits



Click to see specific job salaries



Get the right advice & training

You may feel you need extra support to get the job you really want.

To help you, South West London's colleges offer a host of options for training and education. For instance, the South Thames College group has several healthcare-related courses from first aid basics and care certification to more specialised training.

Meanwhile, Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College (RHACC) lets you book time with an advisor to talk about your career options as well as get expert guidance on education, basic literacy, basic numeracy, funding and more. Finally, London Learning Consortium (LLC) offers an amazing programme that delivers in-depth job support to any SW London resident who is aged 16+ and is unemployed or economically inactive.

“
Here I am achieving
Here I am SW London”
”

Melanie Ashdown
Lead of Integrated Care Support
Services and Aim Solutions



Click here for
full Case Study



Check out South Thames
College courses



Get expert career
advice from RHACC



Sign up for
LLC's programme



How to get your job application right

Ace your NHS job application

Found a job you want to apply to? Then it's time to create a winning application.

At first glance, filling in an NHS job application can appear quite complex and involved. To help better understand the process, check out the NHS's step-by-step guide which takes you through the entire process from start to submission. If you need insights into how the job application process really works – plus how to make your application stand out – then employment advisor Claire Wrynné's top tips are an ideal starting point.

Check out NHS
Job's guide



Read up on top tips
for applications



Write a winning cover letter and CV

No matter the job you're going after, first impressions count.

It's why writing a great cover letter and CV that sells you, your experience and your skills is so important. While NHS Jobs does not require you to write a cover letter or a CV – just complete the application form – applying for a role in some Primary Care (think GP practices or pharmacies) organisations do. For cover letters, the NHS offers a concise easy-to-follow guide to making the most impact as well as free samples and templates to work from.

For CVs, NHS Elect has created an overview of how to get started writing your own. Crucially, it provides useful insights into what the NHS specifically wants to see in your CV – from people who assess them every day.

Write a great
cover letter



How to excel in your NHS job interview

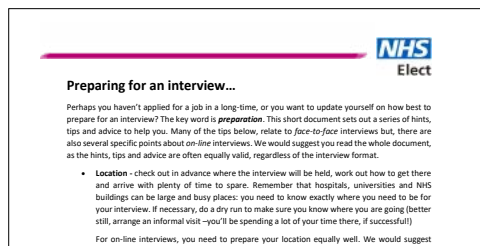
Be 100% ready for your interview

The idea of an interview can be intimidating but with the right guidance, you can go in fully prepared.

The first thing to remember is that interviewers are your allies, not opponents desperate to trip you up. Your cover letter, CV and application have caught their attention so now they want to meet you and get to know you.

To help you get interview-ready, NHS Elect offers a practical guide covering all aspects of the interview process from how to dress and get into the right head space to not being afraid to ask for clarification. You can also take your interview preparation to the next level by using the Guardian newspaper's advice for conducting your own mock interviews.

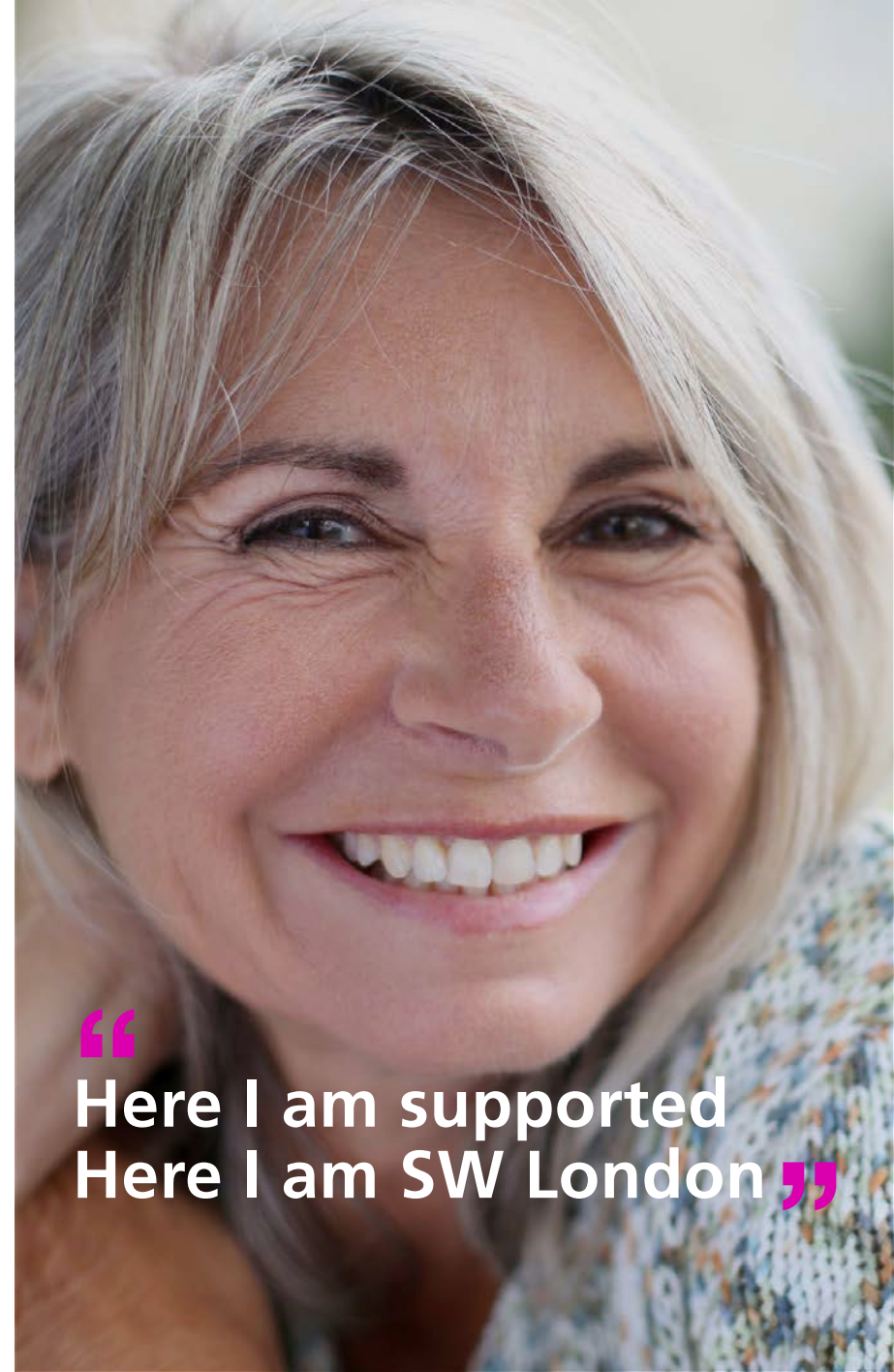
Check out NHS Elect's interview advice



Read the Guardian's mock interview guide



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Learn about typical NHS interview questions

Get more confident about your interview by knowing what questions to expect.

NHS interviews often feature questions that you would expect to be asked in any job interview. These are combined with questions focusing on the job itself and, of course, questions about who you are.

To get an idea of what questions you'll be asked, check out job recruitment agency Indeed's sample questions and answers for Band 2 (think receptionist, catering staff, etc.) and Band 3 jobs (such as emergency care assistants, occupational therapists, etc.). Also, don't forget to have your own questions ready to ask at the end of the interview. ID Medical has a great list of the right – and wrong – questions to ask.

Bands explained

Most NHS pay rates are set via a band system from two to nine. For example, Band 2 is an entry level salary (assistant roles) while Band 9 is for senior managers, consultants and specialists. There is also the VSM grade for Very Senior Managers (think chief executives) and Medical grades for doctors and dentists.

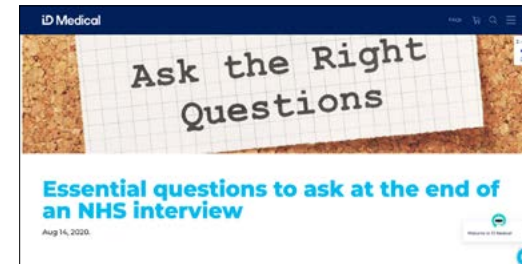
View Indeed's guide to sample Band 2 questions



View Indeed's guide to sample Band 3 questions



Check out ID Medical's questions to ask





Get into Work

What's next?

Once you've got your job, consider heading to the 'Get a career' section to explore how you can turn it into a full-blown career. If you didn't get into work this time round, then try another opportunity or alternatively, head to the 'Get support' section to access more in-depth help for landing a job.

“
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Get confident

Feeling insecure about getting a job in the NHS? Don't worry – you're not alone.

Perhaps you're feeling nervous about the process or don't think you have the right skills or aptitude. In reality, you've probably already got everything you need to land your first job at SWL NHS – but just require a boost to your confidence to take those first vital steps. From connecting with support groups to NHS volunteering that builds up confidence levels and experience, here's how to get started on your journey.

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Maame Jehu-Appiah
Foundation Trainee Pharmacist



Click here for
full Case Study



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How to give your confidence a boost

Get voluntary experience

Build up your confidence and increase the chances of landing a job by volunteering.

Not only is volunteering a brilliant way to get confident but it also gives you first hand experience of what to expect when working in the NHS. You'll work alongside staff who you can talk to about their experiences – and your own. Most importantly, volunteering gives you a real idea of just how rewarding it can be to help support healthcare organisations, staff and people in your community.

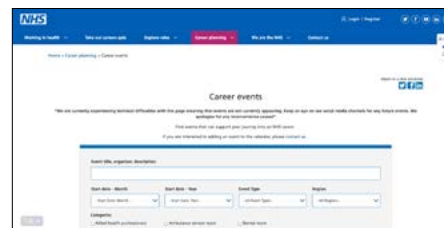
To get an idea of the opportunities available nationwide, check out the official NHS Volunteering page. Also read up on its Youth Volunteering opportunities for 16-17 year-olds plus learn about the NHS Cadets, a programme designed for 14-18 year-olds to help them explore roles within the NHS.

Attend local NHS career events

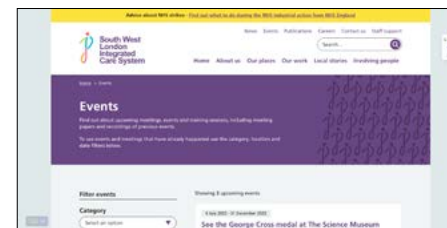
Meet potential recruiters and explore career opportunities in your area.

Career events are ideal for meeting your potential future NHS employer face-to-face before even applying for a job. Held all over the country as well as locally, these events give you the chance to meet experienced healthcare pros who will be happy to talk and give advice. If you're feeling brave, you might want to consider attending a recruitment event. These can lead to interviews on the day itself with jobs sometimes offered on the spot!

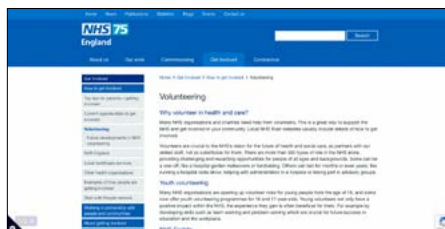
Attend an NHS career event



Events - South West London ICS



Help out with NHS Volunteering



Join up with the NHS Cadets



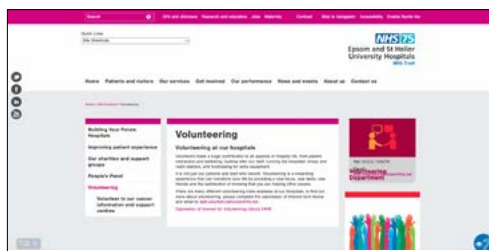
Go local.

There is plenty of local voluntary work available in your area too. For instance, South West London and St George's Mental Health Trust are always looking for people over 18 with lived experiences of mental health difficulties or caring for someone with a mental illness, plus residents from different cultural, economic, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Check out the full list of local opportunities below to find a volunteering role near you.

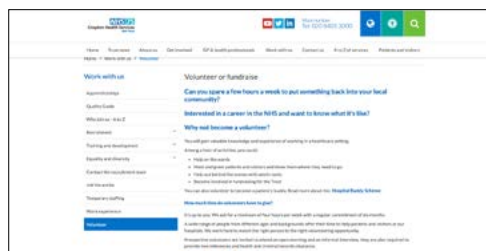
“Just the very fact of having somebody to go and talk to is a great thing.”

Melanie Ashdown
Lead of Integrated Care Support
Services and Aim Solutions

Volunteer at Epsom and St Helier hospitals



Volunteer at Croydon Health Services



Volunteer at St George's



Volunteer at Kingston hospital



Volunteer at Hounslow & Richmond Healthcare



How to get a head start in the NHS

Get real-life experience of NHS working

The best way to learn about the NHS and its opportunities is to get NHS work experience.

Work experience offers an ideal way to discover how the NHS works, what area you're interested in and most importantly, see what it's like to work as a part of team. Such insights are invaluable whether you're planning to head to university with the aim of joining the NHS later – or want to start applying for NHS work right away.

To begin, get an idea of the area you would like to work in before contacting the trust nearest you and asking to speak to someone in Human Resources. They will refer you to the person in charge of work experience who will take you through the process, which includes an application form and interview. Once approved, you're good to go.

Become an apprentice

Doing an apprenticeship offers a great way into NHS work and getting a nationally recognised qualification.

Many NHS SWL trusts and other healthcare providers offer apprenticeships. These are available across many different areas from clinical support and dental nursing to business admin and library services. Your educational achievements don't matter either as there are four levels of apprenticeship available. These start at intermediate (the equivalent of getting five GCSEs) all the way up to degree level.

Undertaking an apprenticeship takes between one to five years to complete, is available to anyone over the age of 16, and comes with a wage. Most importantly, completing an apprenticeship opens so many doors into full-time NHS careers. Finally, don't worry if you don't feel ready for an apprenticeship – you can do a traineeship first to get you up to speed.

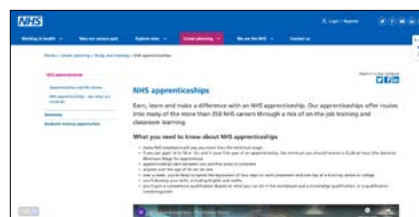
Learn all about NHS work experience



Read work experience success stories



Learn more about apprenticeships



Hear from NHS staff who did an apprenticeship



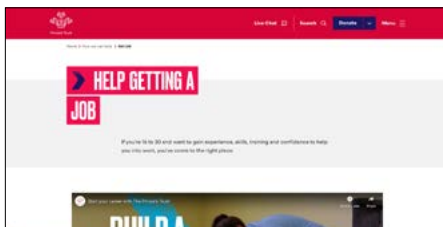
How to boost your personal confidence

Don't be afraid to ask for help

Reach out and connect with caring people who want to help you succeed.

If you need a little extra help getting up and running, you can always turn to national and local organisations for practical guidance and advice. For instance, The Prince's Trust offers a host of confidence-building programmes and courses that help young people get into NHS work. Aid includes securing work experience, gaining the right skills, getting advice on CV and interviews – and even support for hunting down an NHS job that matches your experience and skills.

Get in touch with
The Prince's Trust



“Here I am supported
Here I am SW London”

Learn relaxation and positive thinking techniques

We can build confidence by being kind to ourselves and finding ways to unwind and de-stress.

To understand how meditation techniques can help you in everyday life, watch South West London and St George's Mental Health's video 'Mindfulness for Beginners'. For more calmness exercises, the NHS has also produced a series of short videos to help calm your mind in a single minute as well as literally 'shake off' stress.

Want to commit more time to improving your mental wellbeing? Get your free NHS mind plan. It asks you five questions about the challenges you face in your life before coming up with a step-by-step personalised plan with a free supporting app. You can use the plan in your own time to help become more calm and confident moving forwards.

“
The NHS can be a great
for learning because
you see a lot of
variety.”

Andrew Nwosu
Chief Allied Health
Professions Officer

View short videos to
help calm your day



Get your free
NHS mind plan



Learn about the
positive power of
mindfulness





Are you looking for support to find a job?

Reach out and connect with caring people who want to help you succeed.

For help with interviews, NHS job applications, interview skills as well as a chance to explore the benefits you may be entitled to. Click here to connect with your local [Jobcentre Plus](#).

Did you know the Job Centre plus can also refer you to Better Working futures, Employment Advisers to help you with finding the right kind of employment support for you. Employment Advisers will help you in developing a plan of action to providing you with information, support and guidance.

The [National Careers Service](#) can help you with your career, learning and training choices. Find out more about their services and the different ways they can support you here.

Explore the different careers in Health Care with the National Careers Service [here](#).

The [Princes Trust](#) help young people aged between 18 to 30 with support that ranges from building confidence, developing the right skills to offering financial support.

The Princes Trust can also provide practical support for young people who are just about to start a new job in the NHS. Please contact them [here](#).

A charity we work with supports homeless people with employability, find out more [Thames Reach, Employment Academy](#).



Get confident What's next?

Once you feel you've built up your confidence, head to the 'Get into Work' section to explore the work opportunities available at NHS SWL. If you feel you need more in-depth, targeted help, then head to the 'Get Support' section for resources and links designed to get you work-ready.

“
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Get Support

Some of us can feel our background or identity can work against us when going after a job.

We don't know what your life has been like – or the challenges you have faced or continue to face every day. But because NHS SWL is made up of so many different people with their own unique stories, we do know that some of us need support getting into and staying in work. From help for people with disabilities or mental health issues to community support for people of colour who face discrimination, here's our guide to services that offer the help you need to get into and stay in the NHS.

“

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Yasmin
Project Support Officer



[Click here for
full Case Study](#)

“

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How to get the support you need

Reach out to your local job centre

If you're feeling stressed about your work prospects – or even lost – then knowing where to start looking for support is vital.

Consider contacting your local job centre and asking for Job Centre Plus support. This service helps you understand what benefits and financial support you are entitled to, how you can get help with any physical or mental health issues, and what support is available to get you into work.

Learn what support
Job Centre Plus offers



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”

Find out about official support services

The right services give you the support you need to help move forward with your working life.

The government's Access to Work scheme offers targeted help for those who have a physical/mental health condition or disability with grants available to support you into work. Alternatively, the Work and Health Programme provides substantial support if you are struggling or are at risk, offering invaluable services including identifying skill sets, training for work, managing any health problems, and much more. Finally, head to the government's official 'Benefits and financial support' page and use its benefits calculator to find out what support you are entitled to.

“

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Wendy Majewska
Primary Care Training Hub Lead
South West London Mental Health
and WellBeing Hub



Click here for
full Case Study



Explore Access to
Work's support services



Learn more about the Work
and Health Programme



Get benefits and
financial support



Get help if you're struggling with mental health

Sometimes life can get on top of us and we need help learning to cope

First talk to your GP who can make a diagnose and prescribe medication if required. They can also offer a referral to mental health services to get you the treatment you need. For instance, the NHS's talking therapies service offers cognitive behavioural therapy, counselling, guided self-help and other useful support. Importantly, so long as you have a GP, you don't actually need to be officially referred to the NHS talking therapies service – you can do it yourself if you wish to.

For support with mental health in your local area, help is available from the South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust that covers mental health, benefits and legal advice for people who live in Sutton, Merton and Wandsworth. Alternatively, head to one of the Trust's Recovery cafes that can be found in Tooting, Richmond, Kingston and Wimbledon.n.

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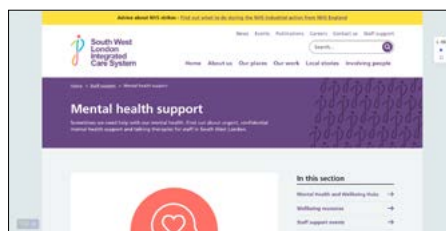
You're not going to be overlooked as you've got life skills that are useful for people.”

Lorraine Podiephatshwa
NHS Social Prescribing
Link Worker

Find an NHS talking therapies service →



Get local support in you area →



Tips for talking about mental health with your GP →





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How to access targeted help and support

No matter what challenges you face, there are many different organisations and charities that can help you with support, counselling and advice – or simply provide you with a safe space to express yourself within.

LOCAL

Croydon Drop-In's Talkbus for Young People

Offers a mobile information support hub on the streets of Croydon for the many issues experienced by 10 to 25-year-olds.



The Ethnicity and Mental Health Improvement Project

Visit the health and wellbeing hub in the New Testament Assembly Church, Tooting, which provides mental health support to Black people.



SWL LGBT+ Information, Support and Advice

Provides information and signposts to advice and support services for LGBT+ individuals in South West London.



South London Listens

Get urgent support and advice from trained NHS mental health advisors, any time, day or night with a direct support line for SW London residents.



Health on the High Street in Croydon

Offers a community hub where you can talk with others about the challenges you face whether they are financial worries, work problems or personal-related issues such as loneliness.



Richmond Carers Centre

Get free and confidential information, advice and emotional support if you are an unpaid carer living in or caring for someone in Richmond upon Thames.



The Sutton Crisis Café

Provides a safe, calm and supportive non-clinical space open 365 days a year for people experiencing a mental health crisis, offering an alternative to attending A&E.



Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing

Find mental health and emotional wellbeing support and services for children and young people in SW London as well as parents, carers, teachers and people working with young people.



NATIONAL

NHS BME Network

Offers an independent network open to all Black and Minority Ethnic people, including staff, patients, service users and carers.



Young Minds

Provides practical tips and advice for young people with mental health worries with information for getting the support you need



Age UK

Gives support and advice for older people who want further education and training or to get into work.



Black Minds Matter UK

Connects Black individuals and families with free mental health services by professional Black therapists to support their mental health.



Scope

Offers a free online and telephone support programme for disabled people who are looking for paid work in England and Wales.



The Mix

Offers young people support, advice and counselling on a wide range of issues from mental health and money to finding a job.



Childline

Offers counselling, advice and support 24/7 for any issue if you are under the age of 19.



“

It's knowing that I'm making a difference.”

Melanie Ashdown
Lead of Integrated Care Support
Services and Aim Solutions



Get support What's next?

Once you feel you're ready to find a job, head to the 'Get into Work' section to explore the many opportunities available in South West London. However, if you feel you need more help managing your lifestyle, head to the 'Get Life Skills' section to get specialist insights into how to make your life more manageable.

“
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Here I am SW London”

Get life skills

You may be struggling to live a structured day-to-day life, never mind hold down a job – let us help you make the right lifestyle choices so you can get into work..

You might be a young adult who has just left care or perhaps someone who has been longterm unemployed. Whatever your personal circumstances, here's how to get the in-depth help and support you need to create a structured lifestyle that can set you on the right path to rewarding work.

“

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Peter Warburton
Designate Nurse for
Safeguarding Adults

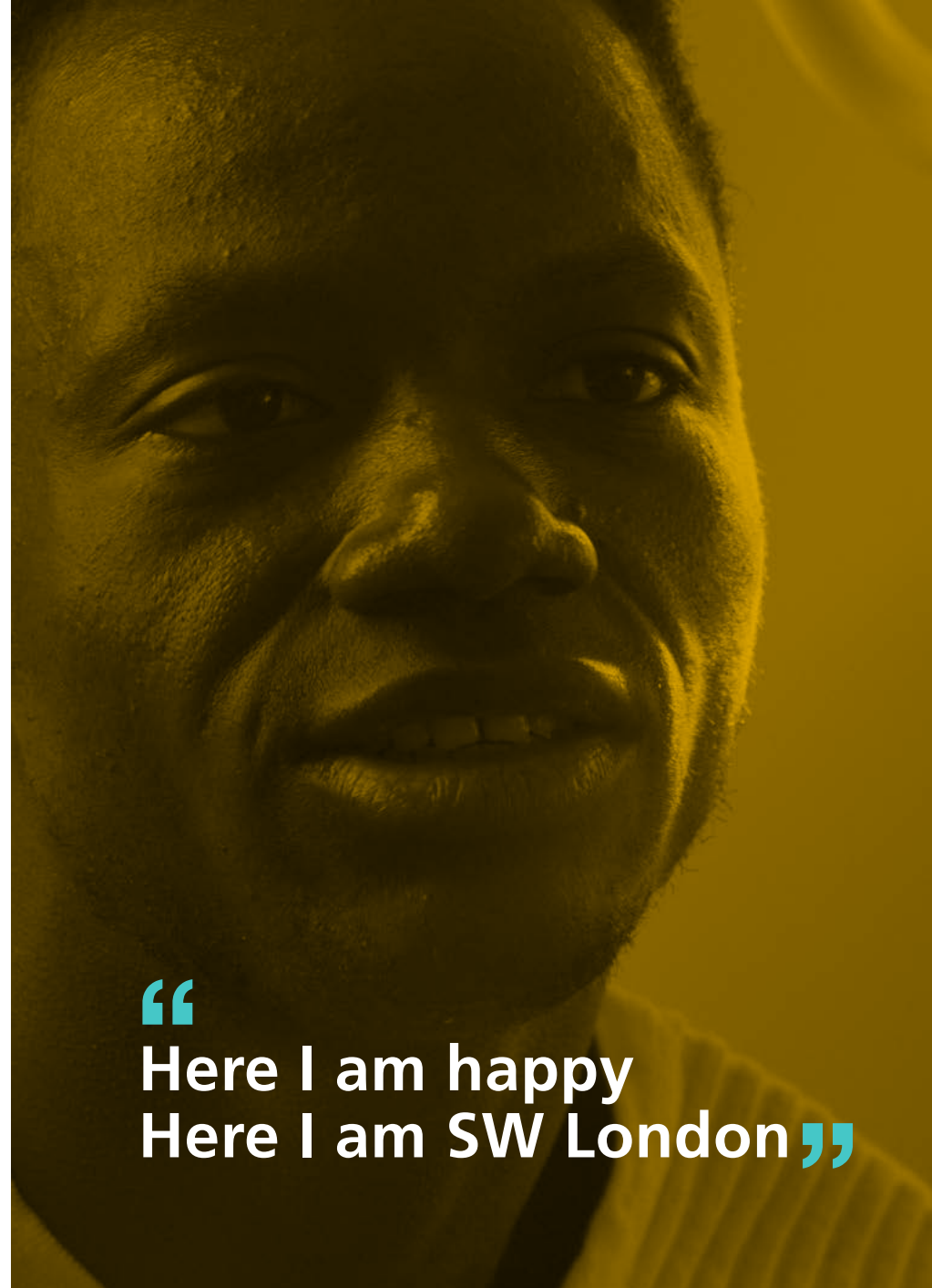


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How to get your life on track

Learn how to manage your personal time

Get it right and you can create the foundations for a satisfying and rewarding lifestyle.

Good time management and routines help you to create a lifestyle that will act as an ideal launch pad for getting into work. Providing support for young people, The Mix has pulled together an excellent blog on how to create a daily schedule with simple step-by-step practical advice. Creating routines for your personal life is also essential with Zapier's productivity guide offering six tips for creating great morning routines plus six for the evening.

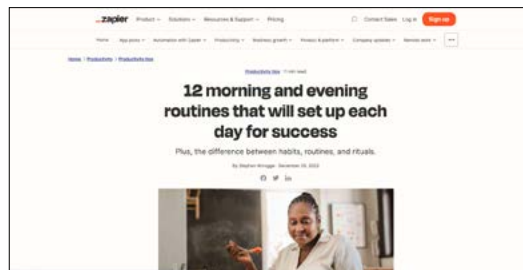
“If we want people to thrive, you've got to support them.”

Andrew Nwosu
Chief Allied Health
Professions Officer

Check out The Mix's daily schedule advice →



Discover Zapier's top tips for creating routines →



Explore life skills for the disabled →

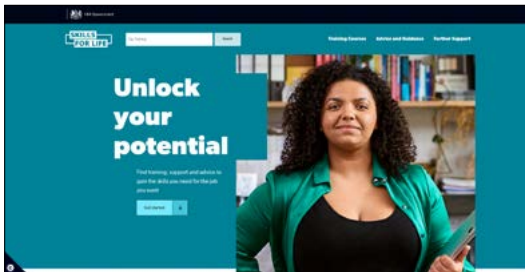


Discover how to gain skills for life

We all have the potential to achieve great things – if we get the resources and support we need.

It's why the government created the Skills for Life programme. It offers a range of useful support and jumping off points for finding suitable training and advice to get into work whether it's in the NHS or elsewhere. From free courses and 'skills bootcamps' to improving your English and Maths knowledge, the Skills for Life website can help you start moving your life in the right direction.

**Boost your learning
with Skills for Life**



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Learn how to manage **your money better**

Get the cash & support you need

Here's how to maximise what you already earn and check if you're getting the benefits you're entitled to.

Living on a low wage was tough enough before the cost of living crisis hit. Thankfully, there is help available. Citizens Advice offers a wide range of advice for those struggling financially, focusing on universal credit, working/child tax credits, and much more.

Want to see if you're owed more benefits? MoneySavingExpert's Martin Lewis offers a 10-minute benefits calculator to find out what you can and should be claiming. Answer a series of questions about your salary and situation, and the calculator produces details of all the benefits you may be entitled to.

Make your money go further

Managing your finances more efficiently is vital during this cost of living crisis.

For practical tips, the government's Money Helper offers advice for managing your money. From getting debts back under control to setting saving goals wherever possible, the site also offers a bill prioritiser and budget planner to help you dig into the details.

If you're a young person who needs help getting your head – and bank balance – round the basics of money management, the Open University offers a free course 'Managing my Money', which only takes a maximum of 24 hours of study. Topics include budgeting effectively, understanding how to manage banking and saving accounts, and more.

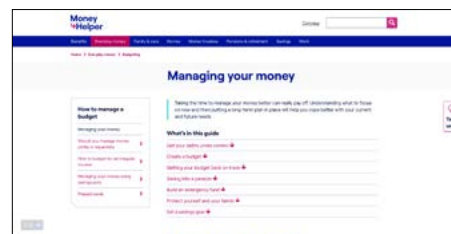
Explore Citizens Advice's range of resources



Use MoneySaveExpert's Benefits Calculator



Use Money Helper to get your finances sorted



Take a free course in money management



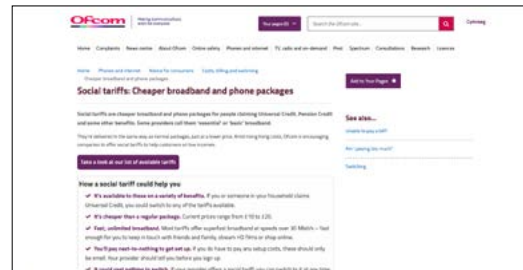
Get the help you need – when you need it

Manage the cost of living more effectively by getting services and goods at lower prices

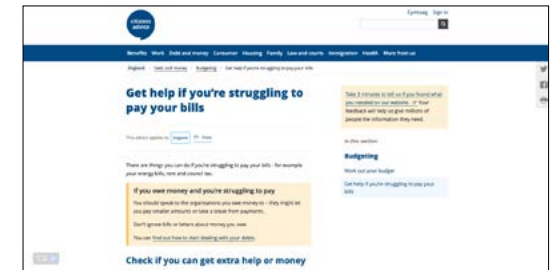
If you are on certain benefits, you could be eligible for social tariffs on broadband and phone packages. These tariffs are cheaper than regular packages, are virtually cost-free to move to, and you can leave the tariff anytime you want to. If you're struggling to pay your bills, Citizens Advice offers support covering all aspects of modern living from paying rent and council tax to managing water and insurance bills.

Travel is also a massive cost for many of us so it's worth checking out the government's 'Help with Travel Costs' site to see what discounts are available to you. Finally, if you are traveling a lot to find work, check with your local job centre to see if you qualify for a Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card, which offers a 50% discount on journeys across Britain.

See if you can switch to a social tariff



Get your bills sorted with Citizens Advice



Get help with your travel costs



Get a Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card



Make your life easier as a care leaver

Capstone: How can we help you?

See if you qualify for a grant of up to £3,000 to help with training, starting a new job, and more.



Barnado's: Are you a care leaver?

Find somewhere to live, learn independent living skills, get into work and more with Barnado's.



Local Offer for care leavers

Find out more about support for young people aged between 18 and 25 who have previously been looked after.



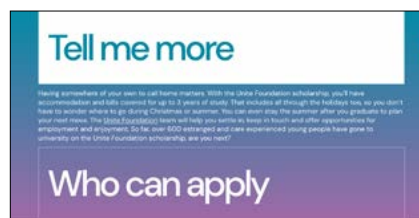
Rees: Financial Assistance

Get financial assistance and money management support from this leading foundation.



Unite Foundation scholarship

Get accommodation and bills covered for up to three years of study while at uni (incl. holidays).



Leaving foster or local authority care

Learn what your local council must legally provide you with once you leave care.



Get costs under control

We're all feeling the pinch at the moment –
here's how a NHS job can help support you.

Because the cost of living crisis remains so acute, we know that every penny counts more than ever. To help manage costs, as an NHS SWL worker, you will have access to a huge range of benefits, discount schemes and more. Together, these can help you to make the very most of your NHS salary – while allowing you to take advantage of some great savings.

“

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Lugman Dawud
Senior Clinical Pharmacist

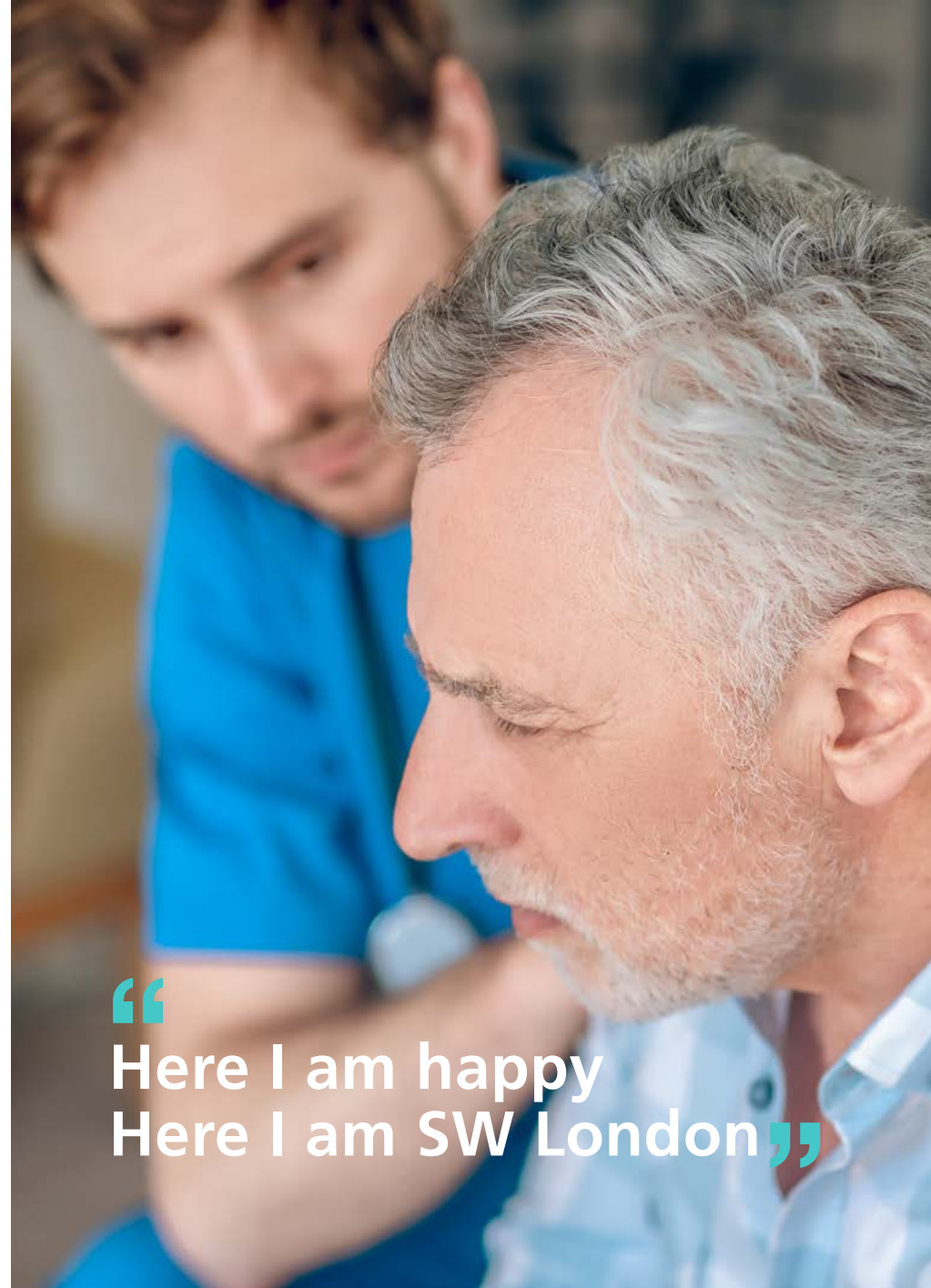


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How to get great employee benefits

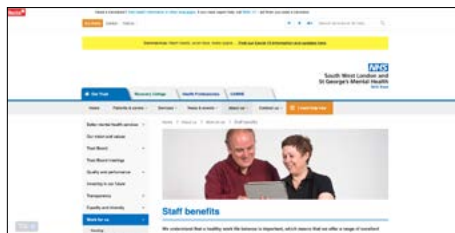
Gain special staff perks

All NHS SWL healthcare organisations offer a wide range of benefits and services for people who work for us – here's what you can expect.

Living on a low wage was tough enough before the cost of living crisis hit. Thankfully, there is help available. Citizens Advice offers a wide range of advice for those struggling financially, focusing on universal credit, working/child tax credits, and much more.

Want to see if you're owed more benefits? MoneySavingExpert's Martin Lewis offers a 10-minute benefits calculator to find out what you can and should be claiming. Answer a series of questions about your salary and situation, and the calculator produces details of all the benefits you may be entitled to.

Explore typical
benefits here



Get free support for your wellbeing

The cost of living can throw unexpected surprises, even shocks, at us sometimes.

If you already work for the NHS and are looking for personal support, head to the Health and Wellbeing Hub. It offers a huge amount of resources covering many different challenges whether you're having issues with mental health or just need to get into a more healthy lifestyle. The Hub has all bases covered – and best of all, it's free.

Head to the Health
and Wellbeing Hub



Bands explained

Most NHS pay rates are set via a band system from two to nine. For example, Band 2 is an entry level salary (assistant roles) while Band 9 is for senior managers, consultants and specialists. There is also the VSM grade for Very Senior Managers (think chief executives) and Medical grades for doctors and dentists.

Get free training to get better paid work

Push your career to the next level with the NHS's range of training programmes

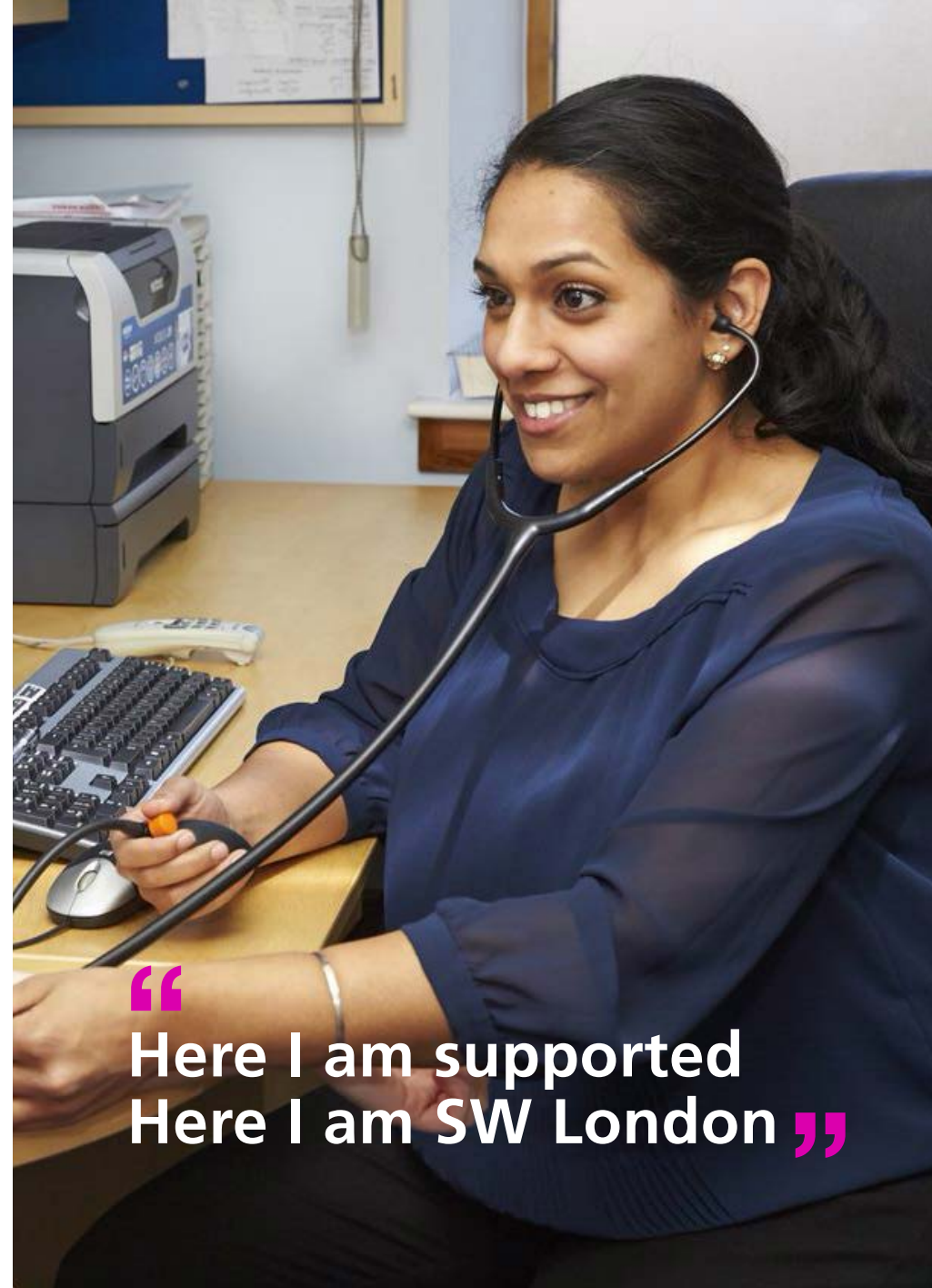
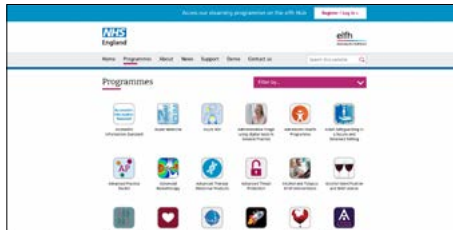
Once you land a job in the NHS, your journey doesn't need to stop there. The NHS offers an e-learning service to expand your knowledge and skills sets. Put the work in and you can secure a more senior position that offers better pay.

E-learning is delivered by over 450 interactive training sessions that use images, video and audio clips to boost your knowledge. The subjects available cover the whole spectrum of services offered by the NHS from acute medicine and care certification through to post Covid services.

Learn more about
NHS e-learning



View the range of
programmes available



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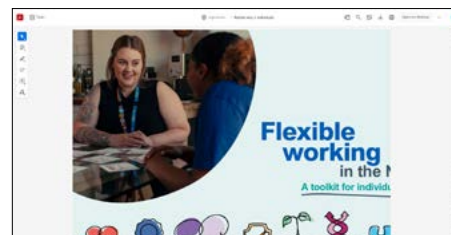
How to manage your flexible working choices

Decide how you want to work

We offer a series of flexible working opportunities to help you fit your work round your life.

From staggered working hours to term-time working, check out a full guide on how to select a flexible option that's suitable for you. It covers your rights, how to discuss and organise your flexible working plan with your manager – and why flexible working is so important for creating the right work-life balance – as well as managing the current cost of living crisis with more confidence.

Get into
flexible working



How to get discounts and financial help

Make your earnings go further

Working for the NHS gives you access to a wide range of discounts and support.

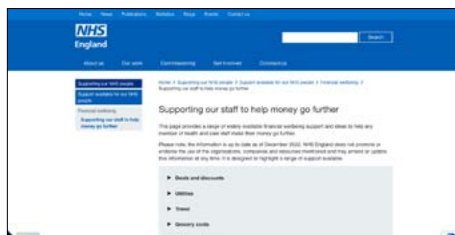
Britain loves its NHS staff. It's why there are some many special discounts offered by shops and other organisations to anyone who works for us. For instance, you can take advantage of several national discount schemes and individual store concessions that give you savings on clothes, food, even home electronics – and much more. For a very small fee, you can also sign up to the Blue Light Card that offers NHS workers over 15,000 discounts on national and local products and services.

Get local discounts

Whether you work for the NHS or not, there are some great local discount schemes available within South West London.

If your job is in Wimbledon town centre, apply for a Privilege Card that gets you discounts on shopping, dining and entertainment in the area. Work in Kingston? Then download the Keep It Kingston discount scheme app. This gives you over 200 offers and discounts across a range of outlets from shops and bars to car parks and hair salons.

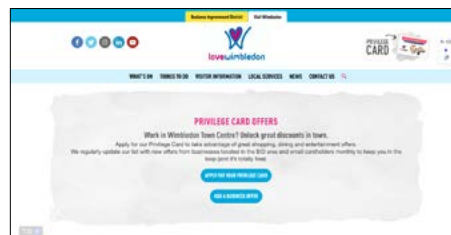
Explore the discounts
available to NHS staff



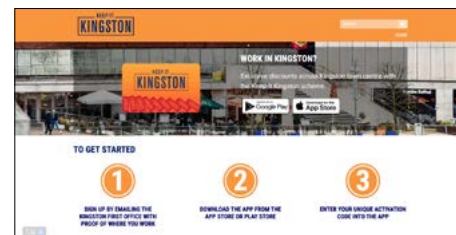
Sign up to the
Blue Light Card



Check out the Wimbledon
Privilege Card



Learn more about the Keep
It Kingston discount app



Get a career

You may already have high hopes for making NHS SWL a longterm choice for your career.

Whether you want something more than a job or are already in the NHS and ready to take the next step, the resources in this section are designed to help you move your career forward in a way that's right for you and your aspirations. From pathways for career development to building a professional network, uncover how to transform your NHS job into a rewarding lifelong vocation.

“
Here I am achieving
Here I am SW London”

Melanie Ashdown
Lead of Integrated Care Support
Services and Aim Solutions



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How to find the right pathway into an NHS career

Transform your job into a career

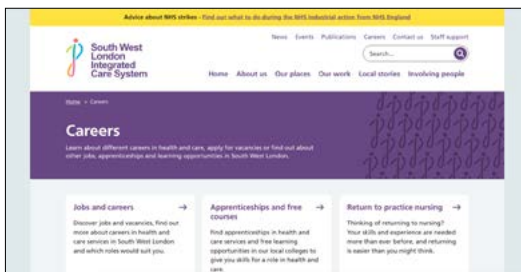
You've landed a job in the NHS job and now you want to turn it in a full-blown career. The question is – how?

The best jumping off point is the NHS SWL Integrated Care System Jobs and Careers page. This details the many vacancies within the SW London region and is even searchable by Trust including Croydon, Hounslow and Richmond, Kingston, Epsom

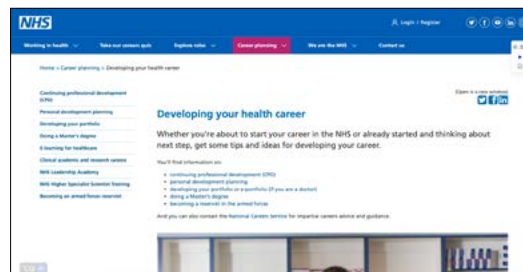
and St Helier, and St George's. You can see what vacancies are available, full details on the role and its benefits, plus what skills and qualifications you will need, and expected salary level.

If you're unclear about how to develop your career, the NHS's 'Developing your Health Career' page offers useful insights on how to expand your potential through continued professional development and personal development planning. You can also enrol in e-learning for healthcare to get the training you need to develop your skill sets even further.

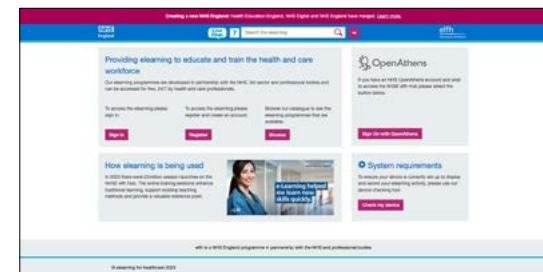
Click to explore
SW London careers



Learn how to
develop your career



Uncover more about
NHS e-learning



Build a professional network

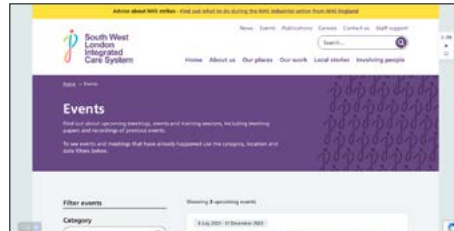
The NHS isn't all about qualifications and training – it's also about meeting like-minded people and creating genuine connections.

Perhaps you need advice on how to move forward – or simply want to meet people who share your lived experience. NHS Networks is a free resource that enables you to network with people working within the same area, sharing information, ideas and news. Best of all, if you can't find a network that fits your needs, then you can create your own.

View the current
networks available



Explore current
events



Return to your NHS career

You may already have had a successful NHS career – but decided to take a break from it due to personal circumstances.

If you now wish to return, the NHS's 'Return to Practice' page offers guidance on how to return to the service after a break of two years or more. From the requirements you need to meet before you can come back through to how to update your skills and knowledge, learn about how to resume your NHS career – and how others have re-entered the NHS with life-affirming results.

Learn how to return
to your NHS career



How to get your work-life balance right

Get the support you need

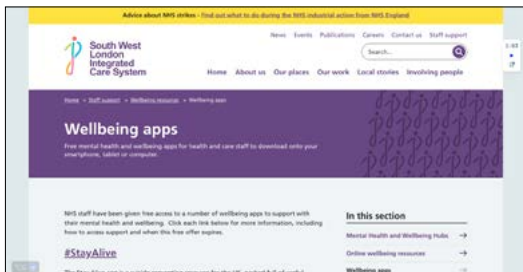
While an NHS career is rewarding, it's vital that you always take care of your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

NHS SWL recognises this, offering a list of wellbeing apps to support you. These can all be downloaded to your phone or tablet and cover many work- and lifestyle-related topics. The Staff Support site also offers a wide range of resources from staff events to emergency help. Finally, mental health support is available across South West London with talking therapies services based in Croydon, Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth.

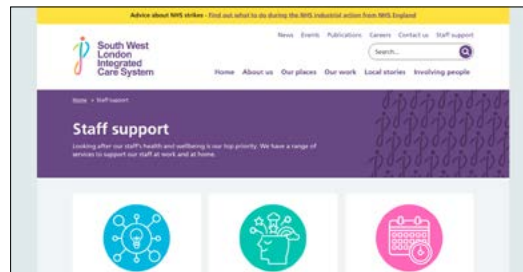
“I feel with my line manager I can contact them anytime and they'll respond and they're very supportive.”

Lorraine Podiephatshwa
NHS Social Prescribing
Link Worker

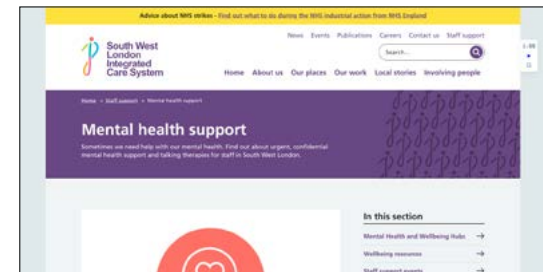
View NHS SWL's wellbeing apps



Get total staff support



Access talking therapies in your area



Our →
Partners,
Your Allies

Our Partners, Your Allies



REED
Jobs board



National Careers Service
Explore careers in Health Care



South Thames College group
Courses



Department
for Work &
Pensions

**Department of
working pensions**



Project Search
Support for young adults with
Learning Disabilities



Richmond and Hillcroft
Adult Community College

Richmond Hillcroft College
Careers advice



**London
Learning consortium**
Learning programmes for young
people and adults



Work match in Wandsworth
Support for local people to access
local jobs and training



Prince's Trust

Princes Trust
Can help new starters in
the NHS aged 18-30



Thames Reach
Careers & volunteering

It's Your Time to Shine

You now have all the information you need to get into NHS SWL work.

By using this toolkit, we hope we have made it easier for you to:

- Understand the best ways to find and successfully apply for a job
- Learn about the many programmes available to get into NHS work
- Boost your confidence levels to get you ready for applying for a job
- Get the support you need to help overcome any personal challenges
- Learn essential life skills that can put you in the best position to get work
- Explore how an NHS job can help you manage the cost of living crisis
- Turn an NHS job into a rewarding, enriching lifelong career



“
Here I am successful
Here I am SW London”

However, if you still have questions, use the contacts we have provided to reach out to us or one of our partners.

We all want to hear your thoughts – and any concerns or doubts – so we can address them and support you into work so you can begin on the next chapter of your life.



“
Here I am supported
Here I am SW London”

We believe NHS South West London is one of the most inclusive organisations in the country and we can't wait to welcome you into it. We wish you the best of luck in your job search.

#timetosshine



“
Here I am happy
Here I am SW London”

Here's to your
brilliant future.

The NHS SWL team