

Healthcare Support Worker (HCSW) Careers Guidance

Healthcare Support Workers assist nurses, therapists, midwives, hospital doctors and other health and social care professionals to deliver high-quality person-centred care.

Support workers work in a wide range of environments, for example hospital, community settings, care homes and GP practices. [The NHS Scotland careers website](#) provides information on all HCSW roles and opportunities.



Interested in becoming a HCSW?

To apply for a job as a Healthcare Support Worker you need a good standard of general education, including English and Maths.

You can access this career through:

1. Direct application
2. Modern Apprenticeship



Key point:

HCSWs enter the role via a number of access points including school leavers, college, other NHS roles or from a non-NHS background.

HCSW role definition

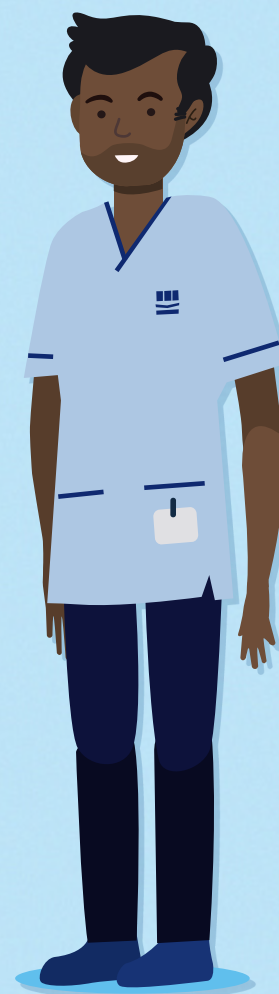
Working closely with the multidisciplinary team, HCSWs monitor individual's health and wellbeing, observing them and updating their records. HCSWs communicate with other healthcare professionals, individual's families and carers to provide a high level of care reflecting what matters to them as individuals.

A HCSWs role includes:

- + monitoring an individual's health
- + updating records
- + helping individual's wash, shower or dress
- + serve food to individuals or help them to eat
- + keep supplies and equipment in order

HCSWs need these skills:

- + a caring approach
- + able to communicate with people
- + able to motivate people
- + problem-solving
- + relationship-building



HCSWs play an extremely valuable role in health teams. Their learning and development is important in supporting safe, effective and person-centred care. The [HCSW Learning Framework](#) has 4 Pillars of Practice. It recognises how complex Support Worker roles have become and helps explain the difference in expectations and learning for Support Workers in Career Framework Levels 2-4.

The first step for all new HCSWs development is undertaking the [Scottish Government Healthcare Support Worker Induction Standards](#). These ensure all new staff have the knowledge and skills needed to contribute effectively to the delivery of healthcare and protect the public from harm.

The [Support Worker Code of Conduct](#) was introduced by the Scottish Government in recognition of the important roles HCSWs

perform in peoples experience of care delivery and services. This is a national code which applies to all HCSWs in in NHSScotland.

There are three levels of HCSW:

- + Healthcare Support Worker (Level 2)
- + Senior Healthcare Support Worker (Level 3)
- + Assistant Practitioner (Level 4)

These levels reflect an increasing level of experience and responsibility in the role. There are opportunities to develop new knowledge and skills within the role, to progress into a promoted role or to progress into a registered practitioner role through formal education. A HCSWs role development will be reviewed every year with their manager via the Personal Development Planning cycle. Opportunities for further development can be discussed including opportunities for progression.

Examples of qualifications which can support career development

Possible Access Points in to a HCSW Role

+ School Leaver

You may have undertaken a course at college e.g.

+ National progression Award

+ Foundation Apprenticeships

You may be a Modern Apprentice

+ Modern Apprenticeships Clinical

This may be your first role in the NHS, or you may have moved into this role from another NHS role.

HCSW Mandatory Induction Standards

Workbook should be completed in the first 12 weeks of employment (pro rata) to health.

HCSW Level 2

+ National Progression Awards

+ SVQ Healthcare Support (Clinical) at SCQF level 6

+ SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6

+ HNC Healthcare Practice

HCSW Level 3

+ National Progression Awards

+ SVQ level 3 Healthcare Support (Clinical) at SCQF level 7

+ SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 7

+ HNC Healthcare Practice

+ OU: K101 An introduction to health and social care

Assistant Practitioner Level 4

+ HNC Healthcare Practice

+ Professional Development awards relevant to role

+ OU: K101 An introduction to health and social care

What Next?

You may want to develop further in your NHS career, there are options available if you would like to become a Registered Practitioner.



It isn't always about attending a course.

New learning can be undertaken in a variety of different ways every day at work for example:

Attending safety briefs and huddles

Having good conversations

Practical learning

Supervision

Workbooks

Undertaking web-based learning

Reflecting on practice

Reading relevant materials

Shadowing

e-learning modules

Statutory and mandatory resources



Recording Learning and Recognition of Prior Learning

The [Turas learning portfolio](#) is designed to help create and record evidence including a wide variety of information from day to day learning. It makes recording learning easy; it is safe and secure and provides a permanent record stored online.

Recording learning and reflections on practice in the portfolio is also a great way to record evidence for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). HCSWs use it for access to courses, gaining learning credit or for thinking about their career progression.

RPL means that HCSWs can get recognition for learning undertaken in a work-based environment and learning from life experience to support their career development. Watch the animation on [NES Vimeo](#) to learn more.



Useful Links

[HCSW Learning Framework](#)

[Open University – Health & Social Care Courses](#)

[Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework](#)

[Career Framework for Health](#)

[NHS Scotland careers website](#)

[Recognition of Prior Learning Animation](#)

[Scottish Social Services Council \(SSSC\) Learning Zone](#)

[My Learning...My Way](#)

[Professional Portfolio \(Recognition of Prior Learning\)](#)