

Alternative career options for Medics

This publication lists brief details of a range of careers related to Medicine, and provides links for more information. It includes alternatives to medicine for those who hold a medical degree and have clinical experience (i.e. *qualified doctors*) plus others which have a relationship to medicine and therefore of potential interest to students who are not qualified doctors. For further information see the Health Careers website www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/information-doctors (especially the 'Alternative roles for doctors' link) and information previously produced by The Careers Group, University of London.

Academic Medicine

Academic medicine describes roles for scientifically trained clinicians who work in both patient care and research. Those working in academic medicine are usually called clinical academics. Some clinical academics also teach or lecture: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/clinical-academic-careers

Armed Forces Medicine

Doctors in the Army are also officers and provide medical care for soldiers and their families. See 'Defence medical services' via www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/information-doctors/alternative-roles-doctors

Aviation Medicine (also Aerospace Medicine)

Assessing the fitness to fly of pilots, cabin crew and infirm (a subspecialty of occupational medicine): <http://aerosociety.com/About-Us/specgroups/Aerospace-Medicine>; www.aame.org.uk

Benefits Work

The Health Assessment Advisory Service carries out assessments for the UK Government's Department for Work and Pensions: www.chdauk.co.uk/careers

Charity Administration

Administration involves a variety of tasks; usually the larger the organisation the more specialised the role: www.prospects.ac.uk/charities_voluntary_sector_overview.htm. In particular, you could choose to work for a medical related organisation such as a medical research charity: www.amrc.org.uk

Civil Service in the UK including The Fast Stream

Becoming a Civil Servant could be as simple as applying for one of the many jobs advertised on the website www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk but they also offer separate entry routes for promising graduates and experienced professionals. There are many different departments, agencies and public bodies, including the Department of Health, Public Health England/Public Health Wales, Health Education England, Medical Research Council and more (see list at www.gov.uk/government/organisations). Entry-level jobs in the Civil Service occur at different levels but one major route of entry for graduates is the Fast Stream: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/civil-service-fast-stream. See also www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/information-doctors/alternative-roles-doctors

Clinical Forensic Medical Examiner (Police Surgeon)

Clinical forensic medical examiners (or forensic physicians) spend much of their time examining people who have been arrested. Detainees either ask to see a doctor, or need to be examined to see if they are fit for interview or fit to be detained: The Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine <http://fflm.ac.uk>

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy/Psychological Therapies

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is an evidence-based psychological treatment for a variety of disorders including depression, anxiety, panic disorder, fatigue syndrome, OCD, bulimia nervosa and insomnia: www.babcp.com; www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall/treatments/cbt.aspx. NHS Careers information: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies

Complementary Medicine

Complementary medicine is defined as treatments which are used alongside conventional medical treatments. The five main treatments in the UK are osteopathy, chiropractic, herbalism, homoeopathy, and acupuncture: www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs_health.htm for relevant occupational profiles; nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobfamily/Pages/alternativetherapies.aspx



Coroner

An independent judicial officer responsible for inquiring into violent, sudden and unexpected, unnatural, or suspicious deaths. Coroners need to have a minimum number of years of judicial experience, so a legal career is the first step. Few coroners are doctors but some have qualifications in both medicine and law: www.coronersociety.org.uk

Diving Medicine

Qualified physicians whose work may involve diving research, training, performing "fitness to dive" medical examinations, or treating diving related injuries: www.ddrc.org

Expedition Medicine

Doctors who are expedition medical officers have duties which include risk assessment of the environment and activities, medical histories of participants, assembling medical kit, and advice on immunisations. During the trip they are responsible for managing those who become ill or injured and arranging evacuation in an emergency: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/information-doctors/alternative-roles-doctors; www.expeditionmedicine.co.uk; www.wildernessmedicaltraining.co.uk

Forensic Research/Forensic Pathology

Forensic Research involves devising techniques to help solve crime;

<http://beyondclinical.thecareersgroup.co.uk/professional-profiles/forensic-research>

Forensic pathology is open to medical graduates who have completed foundation training. It is the specialised branch of histopathology concerned with investigating deaths where there are medico-legal implications, e.g. suspected homicides, death in custody and other complex cases: www.rcpath.org/careers/forensic-pathology; <http://fflm.ac.uk>

Health Policy

Health policy research is the process of assessing and choosing between spending and resource alternatives that affect the health care system and the health of the general public:

<http://beyondclinical.thecareersgroup.co.uk/professional-profiles>; www.fph.org.uk/being_a_public_health_consultant

Health Service Management

Responsible for the provision and commissioning of local health care through the management of hospital, general practitioner (GP) and community health services. Managers liaise with all levels of medical staff, whilst considering the demands of political policy and local circumstances: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles 'Management' section

Healthcare Scientist

Many roles are lab-based although others are patient-facing roles. Work in one of four broad areas within the NHS, namely life sciences, physical sciences and biomedical engineering, physiological sciences, or clinical bioinformatics: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles 'Healthcare science' section

Insurance Medicals

A number of the larger insurance companies employ doctors to carry out medicals. Some will provide training. For a list of insurance companies: www.abi.org.uk/About/ABI-members

International Aid and Development

Offers opportunities for doctors as well as roles in other areas where a medical background could be useful, such as project planning and management:

www.prospects.ac.uk/international_aid_development_worker_job_description.htm; www.wse.org.uk

Management Consultancy

Management consultants initiate and implement technological, organisational and behavioural changes in an organisation. Their work involves providing objective appraisals of business operations. Some work in healthcare consultancy: www.prospects.ac.uk/management_consultant_job_description.htm

Medical Devices Equipment Engineer

The medical device industry covers the research, development, manufacture, regulation, marketing and selling of devices from a straightforward dressing to a complex surgical robot. Medical devices are an essential element of health care and play a role in diagnosing, preventing and treating disease, illness and medical conditions. The NHS recruits some Healthcare Scientists into Clinical Engineering & Medical Engineering via the NHS Scientist Training Programme (see relevant section of 'Healthcare science' at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles). The Association of British Healthcare Industries (ABHI) is the industry association for the UK medical devices sector:

www.abhi.org.uk/home.aspx

Medical Education

Medical education is the provision of education related to becoming a doctor, either the initial training at medical school, or postgraduate training. Working as a lecturer in academia usually follows a PhD and postgraduate research experience (see also Medical Research below): see the relevant section at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/information-doctors/alternative-roles-doctors; www.asme.org.uk

Medical Informatics

Medical informatics deals with the resources, devices, and methods required to optimise the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information in health and biomedicine: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/health-informatics: www.ebi.ac.uk

Medical Journalism/Writing, Medical Communications

Medical journalists write articles on medical matters for a variety of media including newspapers, magazines and professional journals, both in print and online, or work in broadcast media. A medical writer is anyone engaged in communication in the medical or allied professions and sciences. The purpose of medical writing is to create documents that effectively and clearly express the messages the data have to tell: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/information-doctors/alternative-roles-doctors; www.medcommsnetworking.co.uk/startingout

Medical Law/The Legal Profession

Law is a potentially attractive alternative profession to medicine (for general careers information see www.prospects.ac.uk/law_sector_graduate_jobs.htm) while dual qualifications in medicine and law are sought for roles in medical defence organisations, risk managers for health trusts, or for coroners. Some Law firms also look out for people specialising in medical law: www.lawsociety.org.uk; www.sodil.co.uk (Society of Doctors in Law). See also the information at: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/information-doctors/alternative-roles-doctors

Medical Illustration/Clinical Photography

A medical illustrator is a professional artist who interprets and creates visual material to help record and disseminate medical, biological and related knowledge. Medical photographers produce accurate and objective images that truthfully record injuries and diseases, as well as the progress of operations and medical procedures: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/physical-sciences-and-biomedical-engineering; www.imi.org.uk/document/careers-in-medical-illustration

Medical Publishing

There are a wide range of roles within publishing. These include editor, proofreader, graphic designer, planner, sales and marketing. Individuals may work on printed or digital information in the form of books, magazines, journals, newspapers, databases, directories and electronic media: <http://medcommsnetworking.com/startingout>

Medical Research (see also Scientific Research and Development below)

Medical researchers are employed in industry, academia, research institutes, medical research charities and hospital labs. Through planning and conducting experiments and analysing results, researchers learn more about the human body. Within academia, many work in 'post-doctoral' positions on short-term contracts and obtaining permanent positions can be difficult. Outside academia, industry and charities rely on generating funding and therefore research can be results-driven: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/information-doctors/alternative-roles-doctors

Medical Sales

Medical representatives are the key contacts between the pharmaceutical / medical equipment industries and the medical profession. They have the responsibility of promoting their company's products directly to GPs and hospital doctors: careers.abpi.org.uk/working-in-the-industry/commercial/Pages/default.aspx; www.allaboutmedicalsales.com

Medical Translation

A medical translator produces alternative versions of original medical materials in other languages. As well as the obvious requirements of language skills and familiarity with technical terminology, you would also need an ability to conduct any background research for appropriate terms, and an understanding of the cultural problems of translation: <http://beyondclinical.thecareersgroup.co.uk/professional-profiles/medical-translation>; www.prospects.ac.uk/translator_job_description.htm

Nutritional Medicine

The basic principles of nutritional medicine are to identify the underlying cause of illness, ensure the body receives the nutrients it needs to rebalance and repair itself, and to remove from the diet substances that aggravate the condition. Jobs exist in the health & medical services, and in the food and food supplement industries: www.nutritionistsociety.org

Occupational Medicine

Occupational medicine is a medical specialty that deals with the relation between work and health: preventing injuries and illness that can occur as a result of work and rehabilitating people back into the workforce if they have had an injury or illness: www.som.org.uk; www.fom.ac.uk/education/careers.

Prison Medicine

Medical officers provide GP services to prison inmates: www.med-co.com/general-practice-behind-bars1

continued:-

Pharmaceutical Medicine (see also Scientific Research and Development below)

Job opportunities for doctors in pharmaceutical medicine range from medical advisory positions and clinical research through to becoming medical director of a company. Patient contact is limited but still possible in the clinical trials area: <http://careers.abpi.org.uk/working-in-the-industry/research/clinical-studies/Pages/clinical-medicine.aspx>

Physician Associate

Supervised by doctors, Physician Associates perform several roles in the diagnosis and management of patients, e.g. carrying out examinations, diagnosing illnesses, taking histories. One of a number of clinical support careers in the NHS wider healthcare team. See www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/physician-associateassistant/physician-associate

Public Finance Accountancy (and Accountancy and Financial services)

Public Finance Accountants are responsible for ensuring the effective operation of accounting and financial activities within public sector organisations. Many work for public bodies, such as local and central government and publicly funded organisations such as the NHS: www.cipfa.org.uk. There are opportunities within the major accountancy firms who provide audit and consultancy services to public bodies, plus graduate careers in other branches of accountancy as well as financial services in general: www.prospects.ac.uk/accountancy_banking_and_finance_sector.htm

Public Health Medicine and other Public Health careers

Public health medicine is a specialty which deals with health at the level of a general population rather than at the level of an individual. The role can vary from responding to outbreaks of disease that need a rapid response, such as food poisoning, to the long term planning of health care and health education: www.fph.org.uk/public_health_careers There are numerous other careers within Public Health many of which do not necessarily require a degree in Medicine: see www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/public-health

Public Relations and Corporate Communications

Media and communications staff build, maintain and manage the reputation of their clients or their employing organisations. Most healthcare organisations have people responsible for effective communication with staff, patients and other stakeholders: www.cipr.co.uk/content/careers-advice

Scientific Research and Development

Graduates might work in scientific industries (including pharmaceutical manufacturing) as research technicians / assistants / trainee scientists (e.g. in clinical research, research and development, process, and production etc), bio- or medical-information officers, regulatory affairs officers, health & safety, and quality assurance. Others work in research within universities as research scientists, typically following a PhD: <http://careers.abpi.org.uk/working-in-the-industry/research/Pages/default.aspx>; www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs_scientific_services.htm

Sports Medicine

Sports and exercise medicine is a medical specialty with a few NHS consultant posts across the UK, while most practitioners are in the private sector: www.basem.co.uk

Travel Medicine

Travel Medicine is an interdisciplinary specialty area so basic training can come from a broad range of specialties such as infectious diseases and tropical medicine, public health medicine, occupational health and primary care: www.lshtm.ac.uk; www.lstmliverpool.ac.uk; the Society of Apothecaries of London runs a 'Diploma in the Medical Care of Catastrophes' www.apothecaries.org; RedR UK offers training in disaster relief: www.redr.org.uk

Voluntary Work Overseas

Health volunteers come from a variety of professional backgrounds, including doctors, nurses, midwives, health managers, educators and therapists, all fighting ill health caused by poverty and working with health professionals in disadvantaged communities: www.vsointernational.org/volunteer/professional/professional-vacancies; www.msf.org.uk

Something completely different

It's estimated that around 50-60% of all graduate-level jobs are open to those from any discipline, so your degree could be well regarded by all sort of employers. The skills you will have developed on your course and subsequent training will be very transferable.

Need help? Current University of Sheffield students (and most UoS graduates within the last three years) can book a careers appointment by telephoning 0114 222 0910. The information on our 'Careers with my degree' webpages is also useful: www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/students/degree/med. For help with developing and researching different career ideas, see 'Explore your Options' www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/students/worktypes. If you are studying a medicine degree and thinking of leaving, talk to your tutors in the Medical School for their advice, and pick up 'Changing or Leaving Your Course' from the Careers Service. You should also book an appointment with a Careers Adviser to discuss your options. Our website www.shef.ac.uk/careers includes an email enquiry service.