

Career resources - Medicine

Career planning

Career Planning is a lifelong process, from choosing where to undertake your foundation programme, your speciality and your first post, through to planning your retirement, possibly with changes of career direction along the way!

Although a potentially complex process, career planning involves four broad steps:

- Understanding yourself (assessing factors that influence career choice, such as your values, interests, skills and personal qualities, plus the practical issues such as your earning requirements, preferred location etc.)
- Researching your options (exploring specialities - and other career options - e.g. by talking to professionals already in the post, work shadowing, and reading information in books / on websites)
- Making decisions (weighing up the pros and cons for your career options, which can involve compromising between your different needs or taking a degree of risk when you don't have all the facts)
- Making things happen (putting your plan into action, finding opportunities, applying and going to interviews)

See the Bigger
Picture

Planning your
career

The University of Sheffield Careers Service has produced a simple, step-by-step guide to help individuals through the four main steps of career planning. Although not directly aimed at those pursuing a career in medicine, the key messages and resources within 'See the Bigger Picture' are still highly relevant.

Download a copy from the Careers Service website:

www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/bigger_picture/see_the_bigger_picture.pdf

If you are just starting to think about your future in medicine:

- Evaluate your clinical placements – what went well / badly? What did you learn about yourself particularly in terms of skills, interests and motivations?
- Which elements of your course are you enjoying most? How does this influence your longer term career plans?
- What do you know about different specialties? Where can you find out more?
- What other factors will influence your career decision making? e.g. location, personal commitments, ambitions
- In which setting do you see yourself working - e.g. hospital or the community?
- How do you see your career in the future in 5 years' time? 10 years? What sort of work/life balance do you seek?



www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk has a four-step 'Career Planning' guide designed to assist you in understanding your options for choosing your future career as a doctor in the NHS.

Careers information

There are over 60 specialties in medicine. The Medical School, working with Health Education Yorkshire & the Humber (HEYH), provides opportunities throughout the curriculum for you to gain insight into the core hospital and community specialties as well as spend time considering the factors that should be taken into account when making career decisions. You will also gain a better understanding of the complexities and responsibilities involved in being expected to take leadership roles. You can use the SSCs in Phase 3a and 4 to gain more experience in specialties they want to explore further. For an outline of these activities, see the PPD longitudinal plan diagram and the PPD handbook in the PPD menu for your Phase on Minerva. If you would like further information, contact a member of the PPD Team (see the PPD Handbook on Minerva for details).

Additional resources that you might wish to explore include:

- Medical careers: www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk (comprehensive career planning guide and information for those pursuing a career as a doctor in the NHS)
- Cardiff University: www.cardiff.ac.uk/pgmde/careersandrecruitment/careerplanning/options/index.html (career planning website including interactive medical careers map)
- NHS Careers website: www.nhscareers.nhs.uk (includes an overview of specialties plus alternative NHS careers)
- Medical and Dental Recruitment and Selection <http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk> (information to support doctors in applying for specialty training posts in the NHS within the UK)
- Royal Society of Medicine: www.rsm.ac.uk/welcom/linkgen.php (useful links to societies and other medical resources in the UK and abroad)
- Joint Royal College of Physicians Training Board: www.jrcptb.org.uk/Pages/homepage.aspx (JRCPTB sets and maintains standards for specialty training in the UK and includes information on all the specialties)



- General Medical Council: www.gmc-uk.org/education/postgraduate.asp (GMC is the independent regulator for doctors in the UK and sets the standards for medical schools and postgraduate education and training)
- British Medical Association: <http://bma.org.uk/developing-your-career> (medical careers information plus jobs pages <http://careers.bmj.com/careers/hospital-medical-healthcare-doctors-jobs.html> and the National Careers Fair <http://careersfair.bmj.com>)
- Health Education Yorkshire & the Humber (HEYH): www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk (postgraduate training in Medicine and Dentistry in the Y & H region)
- 'So you want to be a brain surgeon?' by Chris Ward and Simon Eccles (available on loan from the Careers Service)
- The general careers advice information from the Careers Service is also useful, in addition to the support the Medical School provides.

SCI 59

All University of Sheffield medical students have free access to SCI 59 from Phase 3a of the degree. SCI 59 is an online psychometric test, designed to help you make a start on choosing medical career options that are based on your personal characteristics. It isn't fool-proof and won't come up with all the answers but when combined with in-depth research into the different specialties; talking to professionals about their roles; and participating in other careers activities within the Medical School, it can help you choose which specialties suit you most. **You can use it up to 4 times and it is a good idea to re-do it** over a period of time, as your personal characteristics and opinions may change as you progress through your career. If you are just starting to consider your career options, try not to focus just on those specialties suggested by SCI 59 - explore them all! Access to SCI 59 is provided by Health Education Yorkshire & the Humber (HEYH) rather than the Medical School. You can inquire about access to SCI 59 from the HEYH team who will visit you during the PPD week.

CVs, covering letters and application forms

A good CV allows a potential employer to quickly see a broad outline of your qualifications, experience and skills and to make a judgement on whether or not they'd like to interview you. Ideally, you need to do this within 2 sides of A4. For general help with CVs and applications forms, see the 'CVs, Applications and Interviews' section of the Careers Service website www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students and our guide to 'Applications'. Medical CVs should also specifically include: GMC registration number and registration date (to be included when achieved); Medical Defence Union number; details about your medical degree (including any awards, clinical grades, prizes & scholarships; research / intercalated degree; electives/SSCs); and a brief overview of any medically-related and other work experience ensuring that you highlight all the clinical and transferable skills you have gained so far.

The Royal College of Physicians' publication '*How to write a medical CV*' has further advice: www.rcplondon.ac.uk/sites/default/files/rcp-insight-how-to-write-a-medical-cv.pdf

Application to the Foundation Programme is via an online form, in which you will be required to provide evidence of certain core competencies. Further information on the application process for the Foundation Programme, including a comprehensive handbook, can be found at www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home/how-to-apply. The handbook includes eligibility criteria and details of the application process and the Situational Judgement Test (SJT) used to assess prospective Foundation Doctors. It also provides information about the interview process if you are applying for an Academic Foundation Programme.

Interviews

If you are faced with an interview for an elective, placement or other experience, you can find general interview advice in the 'CVs, Applications and Interviews' webpages at www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students, and the Careers Service guide to 'Interviews and Assessment Centres'. The key to a successful application is thorough preparation. Make sure you are clear about what the opportunity involves and the specific skills/competencies required as well as finding out as much as you can about the employing organisation and the wider sector within which it operates. Think carefully about yourself and the evidence you can give from your previous experiences and personal characteristics, which together demonstrate your suitability for the position and for the employer. Think about the questions you'd like to ask them that show your enthusiasm and interest in the opportunity. Note: interviews are not normally held as part of the national process for Foundation Programme applications other than for Academic FPs.

The Careers Service

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Website: www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students

Email enquiry www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/emailenquiry