

Dietitian

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Overview of the role

Dietitians are healthcare professionals that diagnose and treat diet and nutritional problems, both at an individual patient and wider public health level. Working in a variety of settings with patients of all ages, dietitians support changes to food intake to address diabetes, food allergies, coeliac disease, and metabolic diseases. Dietitians also translate public health and scientific research on food, health, and disease into practical guidance to enable people to make appropriate lifestyle and food choices.



Education and training required

To practice, dietitians must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). To register with the HCPC, completion of an approved degree in dietetics is required. This is usually a BSc (Hons) degree, although there are shortened postgraduate programmes available. A degree apprenticeship standard in dietetics has also been approved.

- HEE Primary care First Contact Practitioner (FCP) training must be completed as the minimum threshold for entry to primary care and be supported by appropriate governance and indemnity.
- HEE primary care FCP training can begin 3-5 years post registration.

Where to study

- The Association of UK Dietitians website has more details on where to study [7]

Career framework

The starting salary for Dieticians is AfC band 7.

Job description

NHSE/I have developed a job description and recruitment pack which is available on the Future NHS website. Access to the site requires user registration [8]. Once registered, navigate to the role selection [9] page to find a range of supporting resources.

For brief outline of activities undertaken, please see below.

- Provide specialist nutrition and diet advice to patients, their carers and healthcare professionals through treatment and education plans and prescriptions.
- Educate patients with diet-related disorders on how they can improve their health and prevent disease by adopting healthier eating and drinking habits.
- Make recommendations to Primary Care Network (PCN) staff regarding changes to medications for the nutritional management of patients, based on interpretation of biochemical, physiological, and dietary requirements.
- Provide dietary support to patients of all ages (from early-life to end-of-life care) in a variety of settings including nurseries, patient homes, and care homes.
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Work as part of a multidisciplinary team (MDT) to gain patients cooperation and understanding in following recommended dietary treatments.

- Develop, implement, and evaluate a seamless nutrition support service that is aimed at continuously improving standards of patient care and wider MDT working.
- Work with clinicians, MDT colleagues, and external agencies to ensure the smooth transition of patients discharged from hospital back into primary care, so that they can continue their diet plan.
- Ensure best practice in clinical practice, caseload management, education, research, and audit, to achieve corporate PCN and local population objectives.
- Undertake a range of administrative tasks such as ensuring stock levels are maintained and securely stored, and equipment is kept in good working order.

Support available for introducing the role

From April 2020, this role will be reimbursed through the Additional Roles Reimbursement scheme at 100% of actual salary plus defined on costs, up to the maximum reimbursable amount of £53,724 over 12 months.

Further information

Health Careers role overview [10]

Association of UK Dietician [11]

Health and Care Professions Council standards of proficiency [12]

NHS England / Improvement ? AHPs in Primary Care Networks [13]



Dietitians in primary care [14]

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Links

- [1] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work>
- [2] <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>
- [4] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/news-blogs-events>
- [5] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/about>
- [6] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/covid-19>
- [7] <https://www.bda.uk.com/about-dietetics/how-become-a-dietitian/where-to-study-dietetics.html>
- [8] https://future.nhs.uk/P_C_N/joinGroup
- [9] https://future.nhs.uk/P_C_N/view?objectID=22243760
- [10] <http://https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/dietitian>
- [11] <https://www.bda.uk.com/>
- [12] <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/dietitians/>
- [13] <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ahp/ahps-in-primary-care-networks/>
- [14] <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/primary-care/dietitians-primary-care>