Nursing Support Worker

As a nursing support worker you help nursing staff to look after patients in hospitals, nursing homes or in the community. You carry out basic care tasks, working as part of a team under the supervision of a qualified nurse or another qualified health worker.

The Work

You could be:

- making beds, and helping move patients in their bed to be more comfortable
- serving meals and helping some patients with eating meals
- helping patients bathe, shower, wash or dress themselves
- changing incontinence pads, fetching and emptying bedpans, removing soiled linen, or assisting patients to the toilet
- keeping family members up to date with their patient's condition
- assisting patients to other parts of the hospital such as x-ray
- helping other members of staff deal with emergencies and coping when a patient dies
- taking note of any changes in the condition of the patients and reporting these to the professional staff
- carrying out clinical care tasks such as measuring blood pressure or taking urine samples.

Pay

Under NHS Agenda for Change, nursing support workers start on Band 2, £26,658 to £28,947 a year. With promotion your salary would rise to Band 3, £29,061 to £31,364 a year. The current pay scales are from April 2026.

Conditions

- You work in hospital wards, hospices, nursing or residential homes.
- You would work under the supervision of a registered nurse.
- You work shifts including nights, evenings and weekends.
- You wear a uniform and sometimes protective clothing.
- There is heavy lifting and moving involved.
- You have to deal with unpleasant sights and smells.

Getting In

- A good general education is useful.
- You can enter through a Modern Apprenticeship in Healthcare Support at SCQF Level 6.
- You may need to sit an entrance test.
- Previous experience in a paid or voluntary role in a health care setting would be an advantage.
- It is useful to have done some first aid or have experience of working with people.
- You can use experience of caring at home to apply for jobs.

- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact Disclosure Scotland for details on the type you would need.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- able to deal with suffering, distress and sometimes death
- a good communicator
- patient and caring
- reassuring and able to explain hospital procedures clearly
- tactful – you must treat all patients with respect
- able to remain calm in emergencies and use your initiative
- able to work well in a team.

Training

- Training is on the job. You would work towards SVQ Health Care Support (Clinical) at SCQF Level 6.
- You may be able to move on to SVQs at SCQF Level 7.
- You would follow an induction process which is reviewed yearly. Training includes hygiene and infection control, safe moving and handling techniques, communication skills and basic life support skills.

Getting On

- With experience and particularly if you take qualifications, you may be able to move to a higher grade, such as a senior nursing support worker, or a more specific role such as theatre support worker.
- You could work for a private company as well as for the National Health Service (NHS).
- You might be able to study part time for the adult nursing degree at the Open University, which can lead to registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

Contacts

NHS Scotland Careers
Website: www.careers.nhs.scot
Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

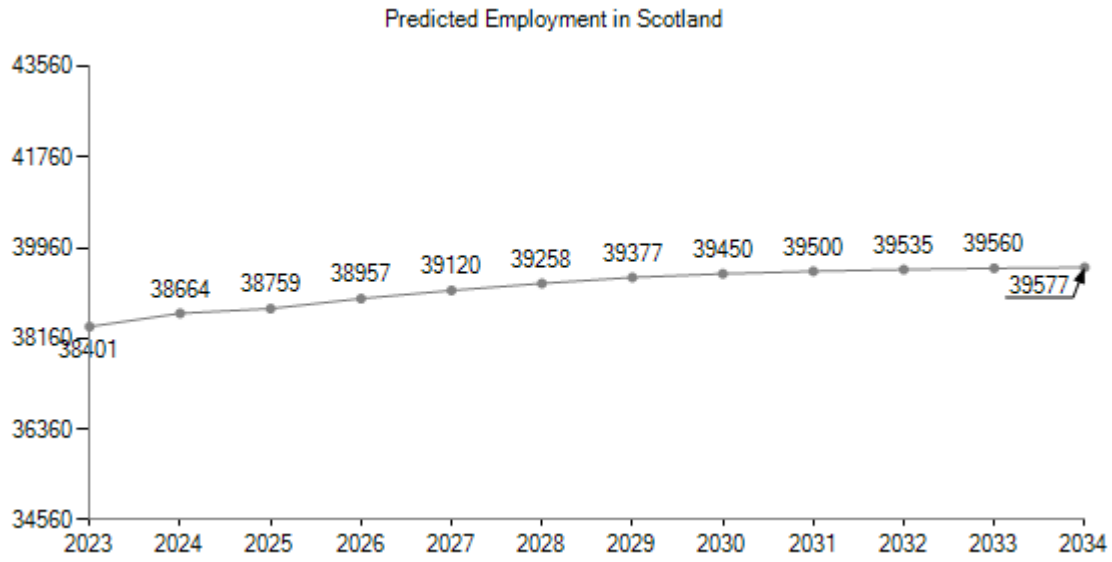
Skills for Health
Tel: 0117 922 1155
Website: www.skillsforhealth.org.uk

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.



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