

Medical Representative

Medical representatives work for medical or pharmaceutical companies. They sell new and existing products, prescription and non-prescription drugs, medical appliances and surgical equipment. They sell mainly to hospitals, doctors and pharmacists.

The Work

You could be:

- covering a large sales area, such as the whole of Scotland
- focusing on selling products related to your company's own specialist field of healthcare such as ophthalmology
- making appointments to visit professional clients in hospitals, health centres and pharmacies to encourage new sales
- presenting information or demonstrating how your product works and explaining its features and benefits
- building up strong and trusting relationships with new and existing clients
- getting feedback from professionals using the products, to help future development of new products
- attending trials of new medical products and staying up to date with new developments
- managing and keeping records of budgets, sales and targets
- attending or organising medical conferences.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting salaries for medical representatives range from £20,000 to £25,000 a year, with experience this could rise to £30,000 a year. Established representatives earn £35,000 to £55,000 a year or more. In most cases you will also get commission on sales. You may also get performance related pay and other benefits such as health insurance, a car, a laptop computer and a mobile phone.

Conditions

- You would spend some of the time in your office but you will mostly be travelling and meeting clients.
- You would work Monday to Friday, but working hours could be long and variable, and you may have to do paperwork at home.
- You may sometimes have to stay away from home overnight.
- You may be expected to attend business dinners and socialise in a professional manner with clients.
- You might get a company car or a car allowance.
- You may have to meet monthly sales targets.

Getting In

- Most entrants have a degree (SCQF Level 9-10) in a science subject, although the profession is open to all graduates. Other entrants come from a variety of backgrounds, including nursing.
- For entry to a degree course you normally need 4-5 Highers in relevant subjects.
- Entrants without medical or life sciences degrees usually have a strong sales background, with an understanding of medical products.
- You may get in from a related job such as medical laboratory technician.
- You need a driving licence.
- You may have to carry samples, which can be heavy.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- able to get on with a wide range of professional people
- smartly presented
- confident, enthusiastic and ambitious
- persuasive
- determined and willing to persevere
- well organised and able to work alone
- able to work under pressure and meet targets
- business-minded or aware.

You need to have:

- excellent communication and presentation skills
- strong networking skills
- knowledge of the technical and medical products you are selling.

Training

- Initial training is on the job. You will learn all about your company's products and how to promote them in a competitive market.
- The Prescription Medicine Code of Practice Authority (PMCPA) regulates the conduct of pharmaceutical representatives. You must sit and pass the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry exam within the first two years of starting a job as a medical representative. You will get training and support for these exams from your employer.
- The qualifications examine the skills and knowledge required to promote medicines.
- Once in the job you take regular short courses to keep up to date with new products.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is essential and includes new products, research developments and competitors' plans and products.

Getting On

- With experience and further skills, you may become a medical sales manager, organising a team of

medical representatives.

- You may then move on to be a senior manager and possibly a company director.
- You might move into selling or marketing specialist products, or training medical representatives.

Contacts

Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI)

Tel: 0207 9303477

Website: www.abpi.org.uk

X: @ABPI_UK

NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

100.00%
FT Employee



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.